

**THE REGIONAL SALES TAX: AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO
TRANSPORTATION FINANCE IN THE ATLANTA REGION**

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The Academic Faculty

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**THE REGIONAL SALES TAX: AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO
TRANSPORTATION FINANCE IN THE ATLANTA REGION**

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SUMMARY

Traditionally, much of the transportation funding in the United States has originated from the federal government. This was especially true in the 1960s and 1970s when large portions of the nation's high capacity road network was put into place, resulting from the Interstate Highway and Defense Act passed in 1956. However, federal funding for transportation has been steadily declining in recent years. In addition, state revenue from the preferred method of funding, the state gas tax, has been following the same trend. As a result, many states have been actively searching for alternative sources to fund their transportation needs. At the metropolitan or municipal level, for example, governments have used the sales tax as a popular source of transportation funding. Dallas, Denver, Phoenix, Charlotte, Minneapolis, Salt Lake City, and Seattle have recently passed sales tax initiatives to fund transportation investments. In 2010, the Georgia General Assembly followed suit, passing the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 into law. The legislation divided the state into 12 separate regions, allowing a public referendum for a 1 percent sales tax increase in each of the 12 regions.

This thesis presents a case study of the Atlanta region, identified as the most diverse and complex region created by the legislation. The region contains 4.18 million residents and is comprised of the City of Atlanta, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, and Rockdale Counties. The Regional Transportation Roundtable, represented by one county commissioner and one mayor from each of the counties, was tasked with producing a project list for the entire 10-County region. The unanimously approved \$6.14 billion project list contained 157 separate projects, 52 percent of which was transit investment. The official campaign for the Atlanta region collected close to \$8 million in donations to run an expensive advertisement campaign. On paper, the big name support for the proponents seemed to be all they would require to secure 50 plus one of the votes

in the Atlanta region. Not only did the proponents have the wallets and hearts of the business community, they had the support of influential legislators, local officials, the Mayor of Atlanta, and the Governor of Georgia. However, the opposition countered with a unique mixture of representation. The Atlanta Tea Party, the Georgia Sierra Club, and the DeKalb NAACP along with legislators and local officials ran a strong grass-roots campaign with a successful marketing strategy. The opposition repeated one phrase that resonated, “the largest tax increase in Georgia’s history.” Polling results leading up to the referendum suggested a close race. However, on July 31, 2012, the Atlanta region overwhelmingly rejected the referendum 62 to 38 percent. The number of ballots cast increased by close to 1.5 times the number of ballots cast in the 2010 primary election and over 2 times the number of ballots cast in the 2008 primary election. The geographic results show a radial trend of increased no votes as the distance from the center of the city increased. Not one county of the 10-County region voted in favor of the referendum. Notably, the city of Atlanta passed the referendum 58 to 42 percent.

Beginning over a year before until five months following the public referendum, 48 interviews were conducted. Participants included a mix of legislators with various levels of involvement in the drafting of the legislation, high level officials of multiple transportation agencies, local politicians involved in the project selection process, representatives from the business community, members of the campaign, and prominent members of the opposition. Those interviewed identified a number of contributing factors to the failure of the referendum (see section 4.10 for a complete list of contributing factors). However, the consensus among those interviewed was that not one of the factors caused the failure of the referendum. Instead, the referendum was significantly influenced by the following overarching national issues:

- The economy;
- The anti-tax movement;
- The looming presidential election;
- Distrust with all levels of government.

These were the driving force in a “perfect storm” of factors which led to the ultimate failure of the referendum on July 31, 2012.

A summary of lessons learned include the following (see section 4.10 for a complete list of lessons learned):

1. Design more flexibility in the legislation and project selection process; Improve the legislation and process by placing an open-ended date for the referendum, allowing an “opt-out” criterion if politically necessary, allowing for a fraction of a penny sales tax, minimizing time between approval of the project list and the referendum, and ensuring that all members of the process understand the fundamental reasoning for the legislation through criteria or restrictions in the legislation;
2. Design process so that long-term support from legislators, local officials, and public is maximized. Address critical stakeholders early in the process;
3. Never use disincentives. When using incentives, the line between a disincentive and an incentive must be far enough apart to not be blurred;
4. Create regions such that the areas share a similar transportation vision. Smaller regions are more likely to share a transportation vision and goal for regionalism. Construct a project list with a small amount of projects with a cohesive transportation vision that is designed to later be marketable by the campaign;
5. Analyze the constituency to determine proper percentages of transit and roadway projects. Analyze the constituency to determine proper criterion percentages such as economic development and congestion mitigation;
6. In an anti-transit region, create the first project list with only a few transit capital projects with construction ideally in the first six years of the sales tax. During the first referendum, attempt to minimize transit funding while choosing transit projects which will only fund actual construction. Ensure that all transit projects will be completed on-time and on-budget. If necessary, build in additional time into the process so that public trust in government is obtained;

7. Avoid placing controversial projects on the project list. Avoid placing “pet projects” and projects which are not “regional” in nature on the project list;
8. The size of regions should be minimized to ensure a similar transportation vision for each region and resulting project list;
9. The size of the project list should be minimized. Project lists and criteria should match the transportation vision agreed upon and be maintained throughout the process;
10. Allow for “real” public involvement and ensure strong levels of public involvement throughout the process;
11. Create a marketing strategy for the campaign which resonates with the public through a cohesive transportation vision. Avoid overselling the message. Minimize campaign presence to voters less likely to vote in favor of the referendum. Balance campaign spending toward more grass-roots efforts. Minimize noticeable campaign spending during an economic recession;
12. Address public concerns about overall trust in government by education and improving on-time and on-budget delivery of current projects.

Other regions in the nation looking to attempt similar referenda can consider many of the lessons provided in this thesis. In addition, the following summarized recommendations should be considered by regions attempting similar referenda:

1. Flexibility should be allowed in the legislation and process;
2. Ensure the project list criteria and composition matches public opinion and critical stakeholder opinions throughout the process;
3. The size of regions should be minimized to ensure a similar transportation vision for each region and resulting project list;
4. The size of the project list should be minimized. Project lists and criteria should match the transportation vision initially agreed upon and be maintained throughout the process;

5. The process timeline must be minimized to reduce opportunity for public criticism;
6. Public involvement should be conducted throughout the process and must match the results in the process and project list;
7. Key issues such as transit governance and public distrust in government must be addressed prior to passing a transportation funding initiative;
8. Regionalism begins with a common interest to work toward, such as a common transportation vision. Ideally, regions should be divided along similar transportation visions.

The Georgia General Assembly did not pass a transportation funding initiative during the 2013 legislative session. Currently, the Atlanta region remains in a “transportation crisis.” Historically, similar initiatives across the nation have passed during a second attempt. Citing this, many are hopeful Atlanta will pass a second attempt. However, the second attempt codified in the legislation required action during the 2013 session to begin the process; the requirements were not met or seriously attempted. In addition, given political barriers, the next attempt is likely a decade away. The next initiative for transportation funding in the region will likely have a different structure laid out in new legislation. The Atlanta region should consider limiting the geography of the regions to provide for a more cohesive transportation vision in the Atlanta region. To remain politically feasible, a likely initiative should include additions which address the entire state of Georgia. Until a new transportation funding source is acquired, the Atlanta region will continue toward a path of limited funding and increased congestion, losing businesses and talent to regions that are addressing their transportation issues.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, much of the transportation funding in the United States has originated from the federal government. This was especially true in the 1960s and 1970s when large portions of the nation's high capacity road network was put into place, resulting from the Interstate Highway and Defense Act passed in 1956. However, federal funding for transportation has been steadily declining in recent years. In addition, state revenue from the preferred method of funding, the state gas tax, has been following the same trend. As a result, many states have been actively searching for alternative sources to fund their transportation needs. At the metropolitan or municipal level, for example, governments have used the sales tax as a popular source of transportation funding. Dallas, Denver, Phoenix, Charlotte, Minneapolis, Salt Lake City, and Seattle have recently passed sales tax initiatives to fund transportation investments.

In the state of Georgia, county level sales tax initiatives have been highly successful for education and transportation funding. The state of Georgia recently enabled a regional sales tax increase for the purpose of funding transportation projects for a 10-year period. The sales tax along with a project list for potential funding was brought to a public vote in twelve separate regions comprising the entire state. Nine of the twelve regions failed to pass the ballot measure. This research examines the factors that caused this to happen, with particular attention given to the most complex and diverse region of the twelve in the state, the Atlanta region.

1.1 Research Objectives

The objective of the research is to document the process and outcome of the public referendum, describe the factors that contributed to its failure in the Atlanta region, and distill lessons learned that will inform the development of effective strategies in Georgia and other states. The following are specific questions that the research aims to answer:

- What historical barriers are affecting transportation investment and progress in the Atlanta region? To what extent has this improved over time?
- What were the influencing factors on the legislation as well as the prior attempts at legislation? How did the Atlanta region end up with the existing legislation?
- What factors influenced the project selection process in the Atlanta region?
- Which portions of the legislation and process it enabled would stakeholders, politicians, and legislators (close to the process and outcome of the referendum retrospectively) change?
- What does the geographic location of voter results imply about the results of the referendum in the Atlanta region?
- How could the process implemented in the Atlanta region be altered to achieve a successful referendum measure?
- What lessons should be learned from an Atlanta case study? How should other regions attempt future transportation referenda?

1.2 Research Methodology

Beginning over a year before until five months following the public referendum, 48 interviews were conducted. Participants included a mix of legislators with various levels of involvement in the drafting of the legislation, high level officials of multiple transportation agencies, local politicians involved in the project selection process, representatives from the business community, members of the campaign, and prominent members of the opposition. Interview guides were developed for participants identified in groups, such as members of the executive committee or legislators. The remaining guides were tailored based on the level of participant involvement. The guides asked a number of specific open-ended questions of each participant, regardless of background or group. Additional questions based on the respective participant were also included. Interview guides contained topics to be discussed but also allowed for the freedom to suggest others. Methodology for interviewing as qualitative research and

using interview guides was followed throughout the interview process [101, 75, 98]. Several stakeholders were interviewed multiple times based on their particular involvement. If a member was consistently involved in the development of the legislation, project selection process, or public referendum, the member was interviewed multiple times throughout the process. Appendix A shows the various interview guides over a number of time frames during the data collection period. Interviewees were selected based on their level and type of involvement in the legislation, project selection process, and public referendum. The interviewees were contacted either via email or phone and asked for a personal interview 30 minutes in length. All interviews were tape-recorded and later transcribed in accordance to methodology in current literature [75, 98]. The ability to “go off-the-record” was allowed and described before the interview. The participants were given a copy of the interview guide at least a week in advance of the scheduled interview. The majority of interviews were conducted in person. Only four interviews were conducted via telephone. Each of the participants is described in a manner which shows their respective position while maintaining their anonymity. In addition, results of the election were analyzed to determine geographic voting patterns. This data originated from the Georgia Secretary of State Elections Division.

1.3 Thesis Organization

The next chapter provides a literature review as well as a brief history of transportation in Georgia and the Atlanta region. This overview focuses on the types of investment that were made during different time periods and the resulting infrastructure improvements made in the state and Atlanta region. The overview also details prior legislative attempts as well as the passage and structure of the Georgia Transportation Investment Act of 2010. Chapter 3 presents a case study of the Atlanta region as it pertains to the referendum. In particular, the case study focuses on the project selection process, the resulting project list, the campaigns for and against the referendum, the results, and the political aftermath. Chapter 4 interprets the results of both the data analysis and the case study and provides lessons learned with respect to transportation referenda. In other words, this chapter discusses what should be done differently if another referendum is placed on the ballot in the future. The final

chapter presents recommendations and a plan for Atlanta to move forward in financing its transportation system.

Chapter II

LITERATURE AND BACKGROUND

2.1 Literature Review

To provide context for the thesis, this section will introduce relevant literature on sales tax initiatives.

2.1.1 The Decline of Federal Funding

During the creation of the Interstate Highway System, U.S. transportation policy was defined by system expansion, growth of vehicle miles traveled (VMT), and transit investment. At that time, federal funding was growing with increased gas tax contributions [8]. Many highway bills passed through Congress and the federal transportation program expanded. This high level of federal investment in transportation trickled down to the state level, producing a pattern of lower overall levels of state and local transportation contributions for infrastructure investments [8].

The previous decades of federal funding has reached an end with a peak in VMT in 2007, the completion of the Interstate Highway System, and the reduction of gas tax revenues due to increased vehicle fuel efficiency and inflation. Given the negative national political environment for tax increases, Congress is reluctant to raise the gas tax to help counteract the dwindling gas tax revenues [8]. As a result, the federal highway program currently has no long-term funding mechanism. This issue is only a small portion of the larger discussion on the U.S. national debt, now exceeding \$16 trillion. The broader implications make the possibility of increasing or even maintaining federal transportation funding unlikely [8].

2.1.2 The Decline of the State Motor Fuel Tax

Similar to the federal gas tax, the Georgia state gas tax is steadily declining due to increased fuel efficiency and inflation. The Georgia General Assembly is reluctant to raise the state gas tax and counteract this decrease because of the unfavorable political climate for tax increases

[95, 97]. Given these barriers, a silent shift has occurred. Federal and state policymakers are pushing funding power down to the local governments.

Devolution in Transportation Finance

There has been a gradual devolution of transportation finance from the traditional sources of federal and state gas taxes in the form of user fees to the local governments in the form of local sales taxes [41, 42, 95]. Studies acknowledge that the United States is experiencing a revolution in transportation finance. In a 2003 report, the earlier successful measures are attributed to earmarked revenue for specific projects. The later projects are typically allocated for less specific project groupings and programs. Studies also mention a trend in California counties of generally lower sales tax revenues toward operations and maintenance for existing infrastructure when compared to new capital investments. Wachs found that rural counties are more likely than urban counties to allow local control of sales tax revenue due to their likelihood of spending revenue on roads rather than transit investment [95]. In California, opportunities to plan regionally were harmed when large portions of the sales tax revenue were sent to the local counties [37, 95, 40]. In all but five of California's transportation sales taxes, flexibility was listed as a problem given the earmarked revenue and its limitation on the transportation authority's ability to shift priorities over time [28, 95]. The report argues that the federal policy and rise of the local sales tax are in direct conflict [95]. As the federal level is devolving transportation finance to the regional level, the state governments are devolving transportation finance to the local level, undermining the influence and impact of regional organizations such as metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) and regional agencies. The devolution has significant implications for metropolitan transportation planning and transportation policy [42, 95]. In a 2003 report, Wachs argued a dozen reasons to increase the gas tax instead of implementing popular alternatives such as the sales tax [94]. A report in 2006 pushed the importance of promoting equity and efficiency in transportation financing by arguing the importance of expanded and continued reliance on user fees [96].

2.1.3 The Local Option Sales Tax

Regardless, many local governments are attempting local option sales tax initiatives. In Georgia, the local option sales tax has been enormously popular on a county-wide basis. The Georgia Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) law of 1985 allowed an optional one percent sales tax to fund projects proposed by the county government. The SPLOSTs were favorable compared to attempts at increasing property taxes and became a politically favorable method for obtaining alternative funding for county governments [57]. In fact, by 1997, 149 of Georgia's 159 counties had utilized a SPLOST for their additional funding needs [57].

According to a recent study, of the 721 sales tax referenda attempted in Georgia from 1998 to 2009, 94 percent passed. This number included both education (ESPLOST) and transportation (TSPLOST) initiatives [57]. Just counting the TSPLOST initiatives, the number still remained at 92.9 percent passing. When broken down into metro area versus non-metro areas, the passage range was actually lower in the metro areas [57]. Figure 1 shows the average ratio of voters who supported SPLOST referenda for transportation funding from 1998 to 2009.

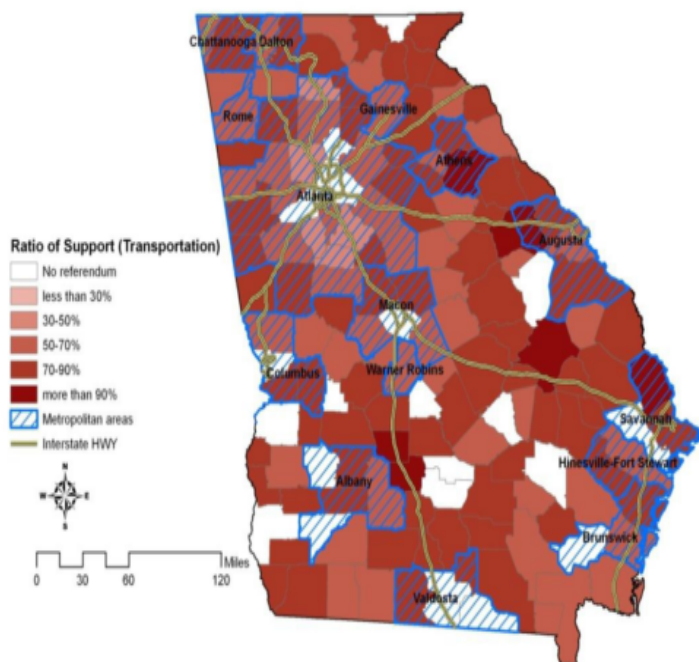


Figure 1: 1998 - 2009 Average Ratio of Voters in Favor of TSPLOST Referenda [57]

2.1.4 The Regional Sales Tax

Several regions across the nation have attempted regional sales tax initiatives. Table 1 shows regional sales tax initiatives from 2001 to 2011 [24]. A comprehensive database of regional sales tax initiatives is not currently available. Relevant information was compiled from an advocacy group known as Center for Transportation Excellence, a group which offers a number of documents for cities, counties, and regions looking to attempt similar alternative funding mechanisms. The identified initiatives were used as examples for Georgia as they reviewed their alternatives. Representatives of the business community mentioned the Center for Transportation Excellence as one of their main sources for information and documentation on prior regional sales tax initiatives.

Table 1: Sales Tax Initiatives Greater than 1 County/City Areas from 2001 - 2011 [24]

Year	Location	Use	Areas Taxed	Outcome	Results
2008	Seattle, Washington	Transit	3 Counties	Passed	58 - 42 %
2008	Espeñola, New Mexico	Transit	4 Counties	Passed	-
2008	Albuquerque, New Mexico	Transportation/Transit	3 Counties	Passed	-
2008	Aspen, Colorado	Transit	2 Counties/6 Cities	Passed	-
2008	California	Transit	2 Counties	Passed	68 - 32 %
2008	Spokane, Washington	Transit	7 Cities	Passed	65 - 35 %
2007	Seattle, Washington	Transportation/Transit	3 Counties	Failed	-
2007	Weber County, Utah	Transportation/Transit	3 Counties	Passed	-
2006	California	Transit	2 Counties	Failed	-
2006	Minnesota	Transportation	Statewide	Passed	57 - 43 %
2004	Denver, Colorado	Transit	8 Counties	Passed	58 - 42 %
2004	San Antonio, Texas	Transportation/Transit	8 Cities	Passed	58 - 41 %
2004	Aspen, Colorado	Transit	2 Counties/6 Cities	Passed	77 - 22 %
2002	Northern Virginia	Transportation	4 Counties/5 Cities	Failed	55 - 45 %
2002	California	Transportation/Transit	Statewide	Failed	58 - 41 %
2002	Washington	Transportation	2 Counties	Passed	57 - 43 %

2.1.5 Case Studies of Local and Regional Sales Tax Initiatives

A 2001 study on local option transportation taxes in the United States determined marked trade-offs between accountability and flexibility. The report mentions that one of the most difficult challenges facing initiatives is “reassuring the public that new tax revenues won’t be squandered.” The report lists a number of ways to increase accountability:

- Time limits to reassure voters that they will have the ability to cancel a tax at a certain point. Short time frames do not allow regional projects that are normally “risky.” Short time frames do allow for a focus on smaller and cost-effective investments which improve the likelihood of governments to deliver on their promise and boost changes

for later voter renewal of the tax;

- Binding project lists that either name a program or specific projects on the list;
- Super majority voter approval to protect against a “motivated minority passing a tax not favored by the majority of citizens”;
- Risk management strategies to avoid revenue shortfalls that can harm the government’s ability to deliver on its promise;
- Long-term financing planning for maintenance and operations funding [41].

The study found that these are valuable recommendations but have unintended consequences. For instance, voter approval creates an unwanted incentive for leaders to focus on popular projects instead of regional projects which results in equity concerns. Also, the binding project list has limited the flexibility to change the project list with shifting opinions. The report lists the following ways to increase flexibility:

- Primacy of regional plans;
- Expert review with alternatives evaluation process and review by state expert review panel;
- Establish clear planning goals;
- Allow for citizen oversight [41].

A study in 2002 found that the move toward voter-approved transportation financing was the product of two trends: (1) the political reluctance to increase user fee revenue given that the state gas tax has failed to keep up with inflation; and (2) the increase in demand for transit projects which are normally not financed by traditional user fees. The study conducted case studies of Alameda County’s Measure B approved in November 2000, Missouri State’s Proposition B rejected in August 2002, the Miami Dade Transit Sales Tax approved in November 2002, Northern Virginia’s regional sales tax referendum rejected in November 2002, and Washington State’s Referendum 51 rejected in November 2002, using the following

criteria: (1) Where will the revenue come from? (2) How will the revenue be spent? (3) What provisions for oversight and accountability have been established? (4) How do proposed projects relate to existing plans and processes? and (5) Is the proposed initiative at the appropriate level of government [38]?

The report recommends the following:

1. Make user fees and the state gas tax more flexible (eliminate restrictions on state gas tax for public transit);
2. Index the gas tax to inflation;
3. Develop new user fees to supplement gas taxes;
4. Specify projects and dedicate funding categories;
5. Broader public involvement during development of the measure (stakeholders and members should be closely involved early in the process);
6. Apply social equity for non-user fees;
7. Emphasize land use planning and growth management as a part of larger transportation ballot measures [38].

In 2007, a study of Sonoma County, California was conducted using precinct-level voting data and census demographic data for three local transportation sales tax elections in the county. Using regression models, it was found that the proximity of voters to the transportation projects on the project list increased their support of the measure. High incomes had a positive relation to voters supporting a referendum. Political leaning impacted support either positive or negative depending on the project list and expenditure plan. Another finding of the study was that the most recent measure passed successfully and was positively affected by the use of a multimodal expenditure plan [46].

In 2000, a report conducted four case studies including Santa Clara and Sonoma Counties in California, and the Denver and Seattle metropolitan areas. The report also analyzed statistics of community-level characteristics of the localities across the nation. Significant

findings showed that initiatives were more successful in areas where the proportion of elderly was greater than nine percent. The report concluded that in areas of less than nine percent elderly, measures may require more determined marketing. Another significant finding of the report confirmed that initiatives are likely to be less successful in localities with higher sales taxes. In addition, the report found that priorities should be based on direct collection from public surveys and focus groups as well as citizen advisory groups and stakeholder involvement throughout the process [45].

A follow up to the previous study used the same case study methodology as the 2000 study and expanded the study to 11 communities. The study found the following:

1. The combination of a credible opposition and a questionable reputation of the transit agency or transit system decrease the chance of success;
2. A comprehensive rail-only package is unlikely to be approved in an area without current transit infrastructure;
3. Limited funding under \$1 million for mailing and television advertisements reduces likelihood of success;
4. Generalization is difficult in the transportation package and developing a consensus transportation project is difficult;
5. Under certain circumstances, voters do not appear to place significant importance on the expiration date of the tax [99].

In 2011, the previous study was replicated. The study closely followed the approach of the 2001 study with the research question “are the same factors that seemed most important to the outcome of transportation tax elections in 2001 still as important 10 years later?” The report found that most factors were replicated from the 2001 study. The following factors were identified as present in successful campaigns or not present in unsuccessful campaigns:

- A consensus among stakeholders along with depth of financial support;
- Use of multimedia campaign techniques;

- Use of experienced campaign consultants;
- A transit agency with a positive public image [44].

The study also recognized “rebound” elections, where ballots were successful in communities that had recently experienced defeats. The findings of these “rebound elections” include the following:

- Assured financing may enhance voter confidence in the deliverability of proposals;
- Specified routes may improve perceptions of individual benefits;
- The reality of tangible service cuts may outweigh other factors [44].

2.2 A Brief History of Transportation in Georgia and the Atlanta Region

Atlanta would not be the bustling international city it is known for today if it were not for its transportation history and infrastructure investment. Historically, the Atlanta region has led transportation innovation with the streetcar network of the 1800s, the extensive interstate system of the mid-1900s, and the heavy rail system of the late-1900s. Atlanta’s transportation history provides a robust timeline of transportation investments, bringing with it social and political influences which still affect transportation policy today. The following sections give a brief history of the Atlanta region as it relates to transportation issues later identified as contributing factors to the failure of the transportation referendum in the Atlanta region.

2.2.1 Terminus to Highways

Given that the majority of cities in the United States were developed based on their proximity to water, Atlanta was far from ordinary. Atlanta was developed mainly due to its functionality as a transportation connection to the Southeastern United States [48]. In 1836, the Georgia General Assembly enabled the creation of the Western & Atlantic Railroad of Georgia. The zero-mile point was known as “Terminus,” marking the end of the rail line originating in Chattanooga, Tennessee [58]. Several rail lines met at Terminus and sparked economic growth and a prominent transportation hub [48].

After being targeted based on its importance for wartime transportation and manufacturing, the majority of the city of Atlanta was burned during the Civil War. Afterward, the city of Atlanta began to rebuild and restore. By 1870, population growth had produced a need for public transportation. In 1871, Atlanta constructed its first streetcar line. By 1881, the Atlanta Street Railway Company operated 11 miles of tracks [70]. The company held a monopoly until the Metropolitan Street Railway Company emerged in 1883. The first streetcars were powered by mules followed by a relatively brief use of locomotives [70]. However, in 1889, the invention of the electric streetcar provided Atlanta with a cheaper and more reliable service, that became increasingly popular into the next few decades. By 1894, Atlanta had developed the second largest streetcar transit system in the Southeast. For the next few decades, the majority of the population in the Atlanta region relied on the streetcar for their transportation needs [70].

But by the end of World War II, a major shift in transportation mode choice changed the face of Atlanta's transportation infrastructure. The automobile was becoming an increasingly more popular choice for the citizens of the Atlanta region. Following this trend in mode choice, the city began designing the transportation infrastructure to better accommodate the automobile [48]. In the 1960s and 1970s a radial network of interstates was constructed. Figure 2 and Figure 3 show aerial views of the city of Atlanta before the construction of the interstate system in 1950 and following construction of a majority of the system in 1967, respectively. The interstates closely resembled the railroad lines Atlanta was initially known for in design and function [48]. Officials began planning increased interstate capacity almost immediately; road widening and highway additions became the main solutions for increased congestion in the following years [48].



Figure 2: 1950 Aerial View of the City of Atlanta Pre-Construction of Interstate System [9]



Figure 3: 1967 Aerial View of the City of Atlanta Post-Construction of Interstate System [10]

With the ability to travel greater distances from their place of work, many decided to move further out into the newly and rapidly expanding suburbs. This trend of decentralization also included employers looking to relocate. Decentralization thus helped shape the unique transportation needs of the Atlanta region [48]. At the same time, Atlanta was secretly struggling with its racial and social issues while publicly boasting itself as “the city too busy to hate.” The automobile served as a barrier to the newly segregated streets of the city [54]. Furthermore, Interstate 75 cut through the core of the city and served as a purposefully designed barrier of the races [54]. Interstate 20 functioned similarly by cutting off black communities in the south from the city [58].

The well documented trend in property ownership known as white flight shaped the transportation infrastructure of the Atlanta region beginning in the 1960s. After the segregationist resistance of the Ku Klux Klan, the Columbians, and the West End Cooperative Corporation ultimately failed, white property owners within the city sold their homes in fear of lowered property values and unwanted impacts from recent school segregation. The city’s white population fled into the suburbs at increasing rates [54]. Figure 4 shows the radial expansion of the overall population between 1960 and 1985. Given this trend compounded with the heavy emergence of the automobile, the city of Atlanta underwent a massive demographic shift from 38 percent proportion identifying as black in the 1960 census to 67 percent identifying as black in the 1980 census [80].

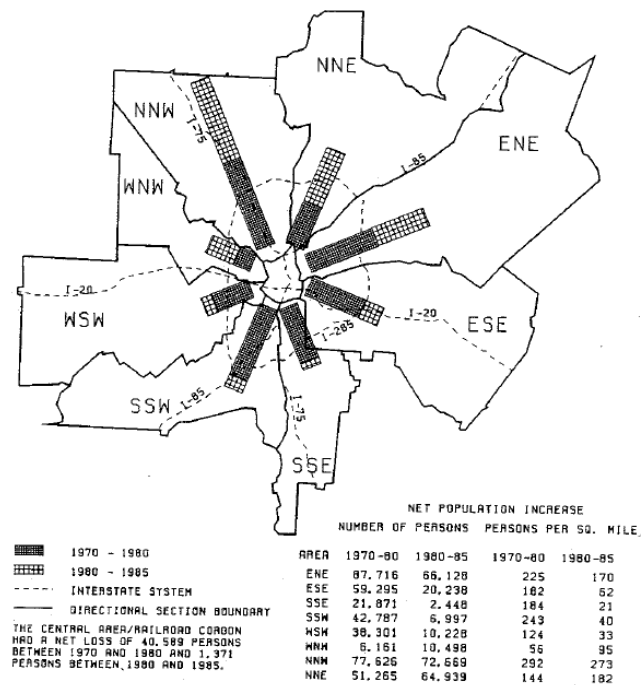


Figure 4: 1970 - 1985 Directions of Growth Persons per Square Mile in Atlanta Region [11]

2.2.2 MARTA Referenda

With a large number within the population regularly commuting to Atlanta from the suburbs, the highway systems experienced high levels of congestion. Projections for an explosion of population growth in the city and suburbs spurred proposals for rapid transit in the region [33]. In the early years of discussion, a referendum was put forth for a public vote which would give counties taxing powers to fund the construction and operation of public transportation systems. The proposal allowed counties to join cities and other counties at their discretion [33]. Fulton and DeKalb Counties voted in favor of the referendum, following the strong support of many civic groups and local officials. Regardless, the referendum was defeated on a statewide level in November 1962. Many believed the defeat was connected to the statewide unfamiliarity with the issue, though the high level of opposition within the inner metropolitan area suggested further reasons for rejection [33].

After the defeat, the Rapid Transit Committee of 100, a committee composed of 100 citizens, was formed with membership from the five county metropolitan area: the City of

Atlanta, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, and Gwinnett Counties. In addition, the Georgia General Assembly established the Georgia State Study Commission on Rapid Transit in 1963. These two groups worked to present another amendment in November 1964, which provided for a public vote in the five county metropolitan area. The referendum held that the rapid transit authority would have a composition of eleven members with the following distribution: 4 from the City of Atlanta, 2 in DeKalb and Fulton respectively, and 1 in Cobb, Clayton, and Gwinnett respectively [33]. All areas passed the amendment, though Cobb County passed by a slim majority of 51 percent [33].

The following year, the Georgia General Assembly passed the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) Act of 1965, which allowed a special referendum for the five county metropolitan area and the city of Atlanta to decide county-specific participation in the rapid transit authority. The referendum was held on June 16, 1965 where all but one county voted in favor of participation. With only 43 percent voting in favor, Cobb County decided to “opt-out” of participation with MARTA [33]. The decision marked the political beginning of a long-standing historical opposition to public transportation by Cobb County officials and citizens.

Planning for the proposal of rapid transit met many different forms of opposition during the next few years. In 1966, black leaders rallied together to oppose the then current plan for rapid transit, concerned that it did not provide proficient service to the black communities of the region. The House shelved the proposal following the loud complaints of a number of influential Atlanta legislators and DeKalb County commissioners [33]. Many influential officials were also concerned by the increase in cost estimates. Georgia’s Governor Lester Maddox summed up the overall discourse when he publicly stated that “Atlanta should improve the expressway system rather than sink hundreds of millions of dollars into an unproven rapid transit system” [33].

Despite heavy opposition, the MARTA board presented a proposal for rapid transit in 1968. The proposal included a 40-mile fixed rail system, five different lines, and thirty-two stations and was voted on by 4 counties: Fulton, DeKalb, Clayton, and Gwinnett [74]. Half of the \$751 million dollar estimate would be covered by the state and federal government

and half would be financed through property taxes [74]. All four counties failed to pass the referendum for the following reasons [48]:

- The rail network did not include a connection with the Atlanta-based private bus service, Atlanta Transit System;
- The property tax method was relatively unpopular at the time;
- There was no public input in the proposal and the public was unable to review the rail plan until two months before the election;
- The black leaders strongly and publicly opposed the proposal on grounds that it did not provide adequate service to the black communities [33].

Given these issues, a number of unsuspecting allies rallied together to defeat the proposition. Opponents included middle class residents, African-Americans, and white conservatives [48].

The MARTA Board took a new initiative after the defeat, specifically targeting the black community in discussions [74]. Taking into account the public input and recent studies on alternative options, the board presented a revised referendum in November of 1971 [48]. The proposal included a 57-mile fixed rail system with 37 stations and two rapid busways with three stations. The proposal stipulated that MARTA would purchase the Atlanta Transit System and integrate its buses into the new system [48]. The cost of \$1.4 billion would be partially covered by the federal government and partially by a local one percent sales tax in the participating counties. The sales tax was a relatively new concept for the state of Georgia, requiring approval by the Georgia General Assembly. Of the four counties, only Fulton and DeKalb Counties passed the referendum by a slim majority of 51 percent [74]. Since Clayton and Gwinnett did not vote in favor, the two counties were not included in the construction and operation of MARTA.

The implications of this seemingly small moment in history were more than any could imagine for the future of transportation finance and policy in Atlanta. Without the addition of rail in the outer counties, a regional network of rail was never implemented within the Atlanta region. Because of this, the rail network did not play a large role in shaping

transportation and development in the region. In addition, decentralization and long construction times dulled the excitement of rail investment in Atlanta [48]. MARTA was unable to influence mode choice and transportation growth in the region. MARTA also was unable to realize its initial promises of providing growth in downtown employment [48].

Much of the MARTA public referenda debate involved race relations at the time. The racial divide between the city and the outer suburban counties has continually influenced Atlanta politics, and in particular Atlanta's transportation politics. This racial divide has played a large role in the failures of many regional approaches to social and economic issues in the region [58]. The MARTA referenda are perfect examples of the prominent geographically oriented political barriers Atlanta officials have faced throughout history. The referenda provide a deeper understanding of the present difficulties of attaining regionalism within the Atlanta area.

2.2.3 OTP versus ITP

In 1969, Georgia completed a substantial transportation infrastructure project. Interstate 285 formed a ring around the city of Atlanta and provided a corridor for the freight industry and others to bypass the heavy traffic of downtown Atlanta. In addition, Interstate 285 serves as a prominent barrier for transportation politics in the region. Interstate 285 divides the region into people who live inside the perimeter (ITP) versus people who live outside the perimeter (OTP) [48]. Many consider this political barrier to be synonymous with urban versus suburban interests in the Atlanta region.

Following the construction of Interstate 285, a surplus of employment centers developed along the perimeter in order to bypass inner city traffic and cut costs. In the 1970s, the trend of decentralization was even more prominent. The suburbs functioned as stand-alone employment centers and shifted new employment opportunities away from Atlanta. A few years later, the suburbs reached comparable levels of employment with the city of Atlanta [48]. At this point, the city was actually losing population to the suburbs.

By the 1990s, there was an unequal presence of employment and overall economic growth in the suburbs, particularly in the northern portion of the Atlanta region. Because of this

unprecedented growth, new economic centers in the northern suburbs shaped commuter patterns away from the standard downtown commute that both MARTA and the central highway system were initially designed for [48]. In fact, by 1990, the number of commuters traveling from suburb to suburb was the dominant commuter choice at 58 percent, with the next closest commuter choice of suburb to city at 18 percent [48].

2.2.4 GRTA and Beyond

The region's success and years of heavy dependence on the automobile resulted in air pollution levels which violated national standards. The city of Atlanta was named in violation of the Clean Air Act Amendment of 1990. By 1999, the city was required to meet the standards or incur withholding of federal highway funding for the region [58]. The business community, among others, took action and pushed for the development of an entity to solve this issue. Governor Roy Barnes took office proclaiming that his first priority would be to address the traffic gridlock. The new governor pushed a bill to create a regional transportation agency [58]. With no significant opposition from a relatively popular new governor and a strong presence from the business community, the bill passed into law early in the 1999 legislative session [58].

In an unprecedented attempt at regionalism, the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) was given power in the 13 counties of the metropolitan Atlanta area. In addition, GRTA was given the power to “plan, coordinate, or directly operate transit systems in its jurisdiction” [58]. GRTA signified a targeted attempt by the business community to overcome regional barriers in transportation. GRTA currently offers Xpress commuter bus service in 12 counties of the Atlanta region [12].

Today, GRTA arguably has never attained its intended goals for regionalism. According to one member of the House of Representatives who served in the legislature for over 21 years, the GRTA bill “may have been one of the most forward-looking pieces of transit governance that the state of Georgia has ever passed” [15]. The legislator argues that GRTA would have been the regional transit authority that Georgia needed, only if Governor Roy Barnes had been re-elected. Governor Roy Barnes lost his re-election campaign to Governor

Sonny Perdue in 2002. The legislator maintains that even though the GRTA bill contained every piece of statutory power that was required for regional governance, the agency has “been emasculated in many ways” since passage of the bill [15].

A member of the Senate recalls another negative effect from the unexpected loss of Governor Roy Barnes’s re-election campaign. In anticipation of a second term, Governor Roy Barnes had positioned a number of major transportation projects for future investment. These projects ranged from a rail line to Cobb County to the controversial outer perimeter project. A member of the Senate blames the state’s inaction on transportation from 2003 to 2007 on the incoming Governor Sonny Perdue. The member maintains that the slashing of the large number of transportation projects in the metropolitan Atlanta region by Governor Perdue caused the legislature to sit around with “nothing in transportation” [18].

The Georgia legislature is currently searching for transit governance alternatives to solve many transportation inefficiencies and work toward improved regionalism. However, a transit governance bill failed to pass at the last hour during the 2012 legislative session due to disagreements over using a weighted or equal representation for the power structure [1]. This attempt failed only a few months before the July 2012 transportation referendum, when pressure to pass transit governance was at its highest. The 2013 legislative session did not produce a transit governance bill due to this issue and the fact that pressure has been reduced after the referendum had failed in the Atlanta region.

2.2.5 The Transportation Crisis

Atlanta transportation plans dating back to the twenties mention the presence of a transportation crisis caused by population growth and the automobile. The Atlanta region has historically experienced difficulties keeping up with its growth and success. Recently, the issue has compounded with a transportation funding crisis. Now not only is the region not keeping up with its growth, it is also experiencing a decline in both federal and state transportation funding.

Over the past 90 years, motor fuel taxes have funded the construction and operation of the majority of transportation infrastructure in the United States. Both federal and

state fuel taxes still serve as the largest source of revenue for transportation; however, the revenue from these sources is steadily declining due to inflation and increased vehicular fuel efficiency.

2.2.6 Business Community Pressures

The success of Georgia businesses relies in part on their ability to move goods and employees to and from their places of business more efficiently. For this reason, the business community has historically pushed for investment in transportation through lobbying and other means.

According to a representative of the business community, the Metro Atlanta Chamber began the process with the 1998 Metro Atlanta Transportation Initiative [25]. The initiative produced a “blueprint” for improving transportation in Atlanta. The final report, written and prepared by McKinsey & Company, Inc., listed seven recommendations for the metro Atlanta region:

1. Set and communicate short-term and long-term performance objectives for Atlanta’s regional transportation system;
2. Adopt aspirations-based strategic planning and land use compliance incentives;
3. Create a regional transit authority to plan and coordinate all transit in the region (currently GRTA);
4. Secure adequate and flexible funding for transportation needs;
5. Build public awareness about transportation issues and alternatives to single occupancy vehicle travel;
6. Mobilize the business community to support recommendations and change commuter behavior;
7. Empower one regionally focused agency with integrated responsibility for planning, resource allocation/authority, and monitoring of implementation for all forms of transportation in the Atlanta region [56].

The fourth recommendation addressed the need for an adequate transportation funding source. The report recognized the lack of flexibility in the current transportation funding structure given that the Georgia Constitution does not allow the use of state gas tax funds for transit funding. Because of this, the local match funding for transit and non-road alternatives in the Atlanta region is limited to local government funding sources such as sales taxes [56]. This recommendation began a long discussion on transportation funding in the Atlanta region. The six other recommendations were implemented by 2005, including the creation of GRTA [25].

In 2005, many of Atlanta’s competitive regions had already addressed or were in the process of addressing their own funding crisis. Traffic was a main factor for companies looking to relocate or invest in a location. The overall perception was that Atlanta had no plans to address its transportation funding crisis [25]. Because of this, the business community was worried that other locations across the nation would be selected for company relocation over the city of Atlanta based on traffic concerns. The business community then began to prepare its case for the Georgia General Assembly leading up to 2007 [25].

Governor Roy Barnes did not want to address the funding issue until his second term, which never occurred. Governor Sonny Perdue was the first Republican governor since the mid-1800s and did not want to tackle the controversial issue until his second term. A member of Governor Sonny Perdue’s office in 2007 recalls the governor pushing back on the pressure by the business community and others to address transportation. People working closely with the governor were not allowed to use the word “funding” in the governor’s presence [4]. During Governor Sonny Perdue’s 2008 re-election campaign, he made promises to the business community that he would “deal with the transportation issue” after his re-election. Following these promises, the business community expected Governor Perdue to move forward with a proposal for transportation in the legislature; however, Governor Perdue did not do so. Fueled by this inaction, the business community formed a unified push for legislative action on Georgia’s transportation issues [18].

2.2.7 The Joint Study Committee

According to a member of the Senate, the Georgia legislature initially identified two different approaches to the transportation issue: regional or statewide. At the time, discussions centered on either allowing an Atlanta regional referendum or allowing a statewide referendum of in which Atlanta would participate [18]. Not being able to decide on an approach, a bipartisan Joint Senate-House Transportation Funding Study Committee was formed.

During the 2007 legislative session, Senate Resolution 365 formed a committee of eight legislators to determine alternative funding mechanisms for future transportation investment [12]. The Joint Study Committee met six times across the state of Georgia during the summer of 2007 [12]. Two work sessions were also held in Atlanta to “develop recommendations for resolutions and proposed legislation to present during the 2008 legislative session of the Georgia General Assembly”[12]. During the meetings, the committee listened to presentations by transportation experts from the local, state, and national level. The committee’s final report was divided into three phases: (1) Identify Transportation Funding Challenges in Georgia; (2) Consider Potential Funding Solutions; (3) Provide Recommendations.

Phase 1 identified that the Georgia population will grow by three million people within the next twenty years. In addition, the committee discussed increasing vehicle miles traveled, truck traffic, and an aging roadway infrastructure [12]. The committee discussed the motor fuel tax in detail. The federal motor fuel tax generated 18.4 cents per gallon, or \$1.3 billion per year. The state motor fuel tax generated 7.5 cents per gallon, as well as 3 percent of the 4 percent from the sales tax on fuel. These two produced 17.3 cents per gallon, or around \$1 billion in state motor fuel tax revenue [12]. Given this current revenue, plus a few other sources of revenue from the state general fund and general obligation bonds, the current and future needs for transportation were determined to significantly exceed current and future funding. The committee concluded that Georgia had “significant transportation problems” [12].

In the second phase, the committee considered potential funding solutions. The committee discussed the following in detail: implementing a State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) to provide low cost loans for transportation projects, to encourage Public-Private Initiatives

(PPIs) which are public and private sector partnerships in transportation improvements, to encourage design-build projects which use a single entity through design and construction services, and mileage based enhancements in the form of a user charge system [12].

In the third phase, the committee considered possible recommendations. The committee discussed the following in detail: asset management, revenue enhancement such as gas tax indexing for inflation, value engineering, marketing, and transit. After the final meeting and two working sessions, the committee developed a final list of eighteen recommendations. Table 2 shows the recommendations and descriptions by the committee [12].

Table 2: Final Recommendations by the Joint Study Committee on Transportation Funding [12]

Recommendation	Description
State Infrastructure Bank (SIB)	Create SIB for providing low cost loans for transportation projects
Design-Build	Increase frequency of design-build contracts
Aviation and Railroad	State funds for statewide airport and rail system
Statewide Transportation Funding	Remove excise tax on motor fuel and placing percentage sales tax on all but motor fuel
Regional Transportation Funding	Allow counties to join as regions to hold referenda at max of one percent sales tax
Statewide Transportation Plan (STP)	Develop of STP
Value Engineering	Urge GDOT to use value engineering
Overall Concession Plan	Urge report from GDOT on overall statewide concession plan
Public Private Initiatives (PPI)	Urge GDOT to award contracts using PPIs
Transit	Support transit in the STP
MagLev - Transrapid	Support construction of MagLev transit line
HOV to HOT Lanes	Urge GDOT to perform a HOT Lane Feasibility and Implementation Study
Efficiency in State Governance	Urge GDOT to privatize and reduce costs
Transportation Oversight Committee	Create Transportation Oversight Committee
State Road and Tollway Authority (SRTA)	Urge SRTA to Report to the House and Senate Transportation Committees
Council for Rural and Human Service Transportation	Create the Georgia Council for Rural Human Services Transportation
The U.S. Department of Transportation	Urge U.S. DOT to devolve federal highway and transit programs to the states

Multiple committee members cited difficulties in convincing the other members to sign off on the final report. One committee member believed that the issue of taxation bothered many committee members [1]. Over the past decade, a huge shift in power occurred. A number of the newly elected Republicans in the House and Senate had signed anti-tax pledges. For this reason, many took issue with signing a document that recommended a tax increase. To make matters worse, tax increases were unpopular recommendations given a looming recession in 2007. After much discussion, each of the joint study committee's members signed the final report. The committee brought the recommendations back to the Georgia legislature for the upcoming 2008 legislative session.

2.2.8 Carrying Out Recommendations

A number of resolutions and bills relating to the Joint Study Committee and recommendations were passed in the next few years:

2008 Session

- House Bill 1019 created a SIB [55];
- House Bill 1189 required the GDOT Commissioner to file a report on the Statewide STP to be completed by June 30, 2009 [77];
- House Resolution 1631 urged GDOT to implement commuter rail services connecting Macon, Atlanta, and Athens [49];
- Senate Bill 417 required the GDOT Commissioner to perform value engineering studies and to produce benchmarks and reports to show progress on construction projects [61];
- Senate Bill 444 allowed GDOT to more easily dispose of surplus property [68];
- Senate Resolution 750 urged the USDOT to “reconsider its mission and purpose” and devolve its federal gas tax funding back to the states [66];
- Senate Resolution 781 urged the GDOT to develop a Statewide Transportation Plan (STP) [64];

- Senate Resolution 1047 urged the GDOT to “consolidate its county barns and privatize road maintenance functions” [67];
- Senate Resolution 1060 urged the GDOT to provide reports to the Georgia General Assembly on maintenance and other progress [63].

2009 Session

- Senate Bill 85 created the Georgia Aviation Authority [50];
- Senate Bill 200 created a Director of Planning position within GDOT, provided for development of transportation plans, and listed duties for the GDOT commissioner and State Transportation Board [100].

2010 Session

- Senate Bill 305 increased the total awarded amount to design-build method projects [59];
- Senate Bill 520 created an intermodal division within GDOT [60].

Though these bills and resolutions expanded and improved their respective areas of Georgia’s transportation system, there was still a great need for a substantial additional funding source for transportation. Throughout the three sessions, the most favorable funding source for both the House and Senate bodies involved some sort of transportation sales tax. The issue and conflicts between the two bodies arose within the specifics of the bill. According to a committee member, the discussion in the 2008 legislative session centered around two separate recommendations: statewide transportation funding and regional transportation funding [18].

Several weeks prior to the beginning of the 2008 legislative, the House and Senate Transportation Committees met to discuss a compromise. The issue continued to center around the logistics of the funding mechanism. The House was set on a statewide funding mechanism and the Senate was set on an Atlanta-specific funding mechanism [18]. Unable to reach a compromise, the House and Senate proposed the two different approaches during

the 2008 legislative session. The House of Representatives passed a statewide approach and the Senate passed a regional approach, a position which occurred during all three years of legislative attempts.

2.2.9 2008 Transportation Funding Initiative

House Bill 1139 of 2008, along with enabling legislation from House Resolution 1226 of 2008, originally allowed a one percent increase in the statewide sales and use tax to fund transportation “capital outlay and maintenance expenses.” This proposed revenue was slated for roadway, aviation, seaport, and public transportation purposes [79]. The one percent increase would be decided by a statewide referendum. Though the referendum was statewide, the project lists for 90 percent of the funding would be determined on a regional basis. Each region would establish a list of transportation projects to be funded. The remaining 10 percent of the funding would be dedicated to statewide transportation purposes under the direction of the Georgia General Assembly [79].

Senate Resolution 845 of 2008 originally proposed a one percent sales tax on multiple counties and cities, given approval by a referendum in each area. The House Committee on Transportation offered a substitute to the resolution which included naming specific districts instead of allowing the counties and municipalities to join at their own will [65]. While in the Senate Conference Committee, the committee offered a substitute which would provide for both a statewide and regional funding mechanism. One portion would utilize a transportation fund from the state gas tax to be managed by GDOT and the Georgia General Assembly. The second portion would allow for a one percent sales tax increase approved by regional referenda. The same special transportation districts recommended by the House Committee on Transportation remained in the substitute [65].

Negotiations were held in the conference committee for a week prior to the final day of the session. The committee ultimately decided on a regional approach. According to a member of the committee, the regional approach would impose a one percent sales tax on the Atlanta region in the form of a constitutional amendment with enabling legislation. The rest of Georgia would receive the fourth penny collected from the state motor fuel tax. The

other three pennies are currently guaranteed to GDOT with the fourth usually directed into the general budget. The regional approach would have allotted that penny “over a phased period of time that would start diverting it toward a centric state aid program for local governments” to aid in local government transportation programs [18].

The Senate voted on the enabling legislation, needing only a simple majority of 29 members. The Senate passed the enabling legislation; however, the Senate failed to pass the constitutional amendment when it received only 35 of the 38 required yes votes. On the same day, the House voted overwhelmingly in favor. The vote of three senators pushed back transportation funding for the state of Georgia for another two years. Many cite the limited leadership of the lieutenant governor for the lack of unified support in the Senate, saying that “Senate leadership had voted against the bill” [1]. Others argue that the overwhelming support seen in the House was not expected given the regional nature of the legislation, a specific that was more favorable in the Senate. Thus, the Senate, assuming it would not pass in the House, did not form a unified push to pass the legislation. Regardless, the issue was pushed off for the next legislative session. According to members of the Senate, the business community was furious.

2.2.10 2009 Transportation Funding Initiative

Prior to the start of the 2009 legislative session, the House and Senate Transportation Committee members as well as the business community and state leadership met to discuss a new compromise. The group agreed to move forward on a multiple-region funding mechanism. The regions were not pre-defined. The counties were allowed to join and create their own regions. Though an early deal had been struck, political issues changed the ultimate validity of the deal. Lieutenant Governor Casey Cagle caused ripples with his hopes of running for governor in the 2010 election [18]. While addressing transportation issues at a public meeting, Casey Cagle promised the business community saying “I will get this done.” According to a member of the Georgia General Assembly, Speaker Glenn Richardson took offense to the statement [18]. During the next meeting for negotiations between the House and Senate, the majority leader arrived as a deal was about to be struck between the two bodies.

The majority leader spoke about reconsidering the deal, informing the committee that the House had decided to move back to a statewide approach. According to the member of the committee, this was the “end of negotiations” for the 2009 session [18]. The House and the Senate moved forward with competing proposals.

The Senate attempted to pass Senate Bill 39 along with enabling legislation in the form of Senate Resolution 44 in the 2009 session. Senate Bill 39 of 2009 originally proposed a one percent transportation sales tax to be allowed in transportation districts by referendum where the districts would develop their respective project lists. The original bill allowed counties to “opt-out” of the sales tax [62]. A floor amendment adjusted the specifics of the “opt-out” criteria. Another floor amendment provided for public studies by GDOT. The Senate passed the bill and enabling legislation in February 2009.

The House offered a substitute in the form of an amendment to the MARTA Act of 1965, which would remove the restrictions placed on MARTA for its sales tax proceeds, otherwise known as the 50/50 sales tax revenue split on capital and maintenance/operations funding. The final House substitute to Senate Bill 39 placed a June 30, 2011 end date on the lifting of the 50/50 split, instead of lifting it altogether. The Senate offered an amendment, essentially removing the entire substitute. The Senate never passed Senate Bill 39 into law. According to a House member, the Senate and House could not agree on the “opt-out” criterion. Many members of the House were not willing to allow an “opt-out” criteria because it was not necessarily “improving transportation for the region.” With the “opt-out” criteria, a seemingly regional bill could easily become a basic local transportation tax in regions not willing to come together for their transportation needs [1]. Other members believe the main issue stemmed from the lieutenant governor’s comments prior to the legislative session. Some believe that given this overarching political issue, the House had no intention of passing legislation during the 2009 session [18]. Though Senate Bill 39 failed for these and other reasons, the House also attempted a bill which would ultimately become the first successful alternative transportation funding bill passed in recent history.

House Bill 277 of 2009 originally proposed the creation of a Transportation Trust Fund along with a Georgia 2020 Transportation Trust Fund Oversight Committee that provided

the criteria and list of programs and projects to be funded through the trust fund. In addition, this bill allowed a 10-year, one percent special transportation sales and use tax to supply the trust fund with the necessary funds [78]. The House Committee on Transportation offered a substitute to the bill which produced specifics to the original bill. The Senate Finance Committee offered a substitute which utilized special transportation districts to develop project lists for their respective transportation funds. The substitute further stated that counties would have the ability to “opt-out” of their involvement within these special transportation districts.

While in conference committee, a member of the Senate remembers that he “felt the whole time, and knew for a fact, that the House had no intentions of making a deal that session” [18]. He reasons that since the House wanted a constitutional amendment, they could pass it in 2010. Essentially, the legislature had another year to come up with the specifics.

Even so, there was an exciting moment that occurred during conference committee. With the understanding that the committee was in agreement and the bill was to be signed, a conference committee meeting was called. The members all sat down to make grand speeches and sign the agreement. The members of the Senate had signed the agreement. But at the last moment, a prominent member of the committee from the House of Representatives said, “I just can’t accept this.” The 2009 transportation funding initiative failed during the last moments of the session [18]. Another member of the Senate attributes the failure to “bad politics.” He reasons that it all stemmed from Speaker Richardson not wanting the initiative to succeed, possibly due to the aforementioned complications with Lieutenant Governor Cagle prior to the 2009 legislative session [17]. A member of the House recalled that the substance of the bill was not in dispute, but only inter-chamber politics centered on the ballot questions between the “then fiery speaker and lieutenant governor” [3]. The two leaders had made it “evident” to all of legislators interviewed that the entire process was “just a game” [1]. The member of the House also mentioned that without this issue, the bill would probably have been adopted [3]. With two years of inaction, many members of the Georgia legislature remember the business community being noticeably angered and unified

for a strong push for action on transportation funding.

2.2.11 The Transportation Investment Act of 2010

In 2010, a compromise was agreed upon and the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 was passed into law. This section details the specifics of the bill and its passage.

Governor Sonny Perdue

Many believed that the main reason the bill took three years to pass the Georgia General Assembly was the lack of state leadership. Three weeks into the 2010 legislative session, however, Governor Sonny Perdue came out in favor of a bill for transportation funding. Once Governor Perdue became involved, other issues that had plagued the process began to fade away [27]. Some members of the Senate and House were so frustrated with their inability to agree in the previous years that they were happy to see the governor get involved. One member of the Senate remembers that once the governor got involved he felt certain that something was going to happen [17]. A member of the House recalls feeling that the governor's plan was "seriously flawed," though "it was very much the message that it was the plan and there will be no other plan" [3]. A marked improvement of relations between the House and Senate also occurred in the 2010 session when the House elected a new speaker. One legislator praised the new speaker saying that he "had a different tactic and a different way of handling things" [1]. Also, there was an underlying political motivation for the Republican Party to move on transportation for Governor Perdue's re-election campaign. Former Governor Roy Barnes was looking to run again and could have used the years of inaction in transportation against Governor Perdue as a campaign issue with the business community. To avoid working with the Democrats in the Georgia General Assembly and speed up the process, among other reasons, leaders in the House decided to go statutory [18]. This meant that the resulting proposal did not need to have enabling legislation. However, given the lack of enabling legislation, questions were asked throughout the process on the constitutionality of the legislation. This topic will be discussed further in chapter 4.

The Georgia Senate

The Senate proposed Senate Bill 366 along with enabling legislation in the form of Senate Resolution 972. The bill called for a phase-in on the fourth penny collected from the state motor fuel tax for transportation purposes and a one percent sales tax in special transportation tax districts with the development of a project list in each district. The bill allowed for the counties to “opt-out” of the districts by allowing the counties initially to decide if they wanted to pass a resolution calling for the referendum. The bill also provided an exemption for counties already utilizing a sales tax for public transportation. This proposal was read and referred by the Senate in February of 2010 [81].

The Georgia House of Representatives

The Transportation Investment Act of 2010 began in the 2010 session as House Bill 1218 of 2009. According to a member of the House, this bill was a template from Governor Perdue [16]. However, this template changed significantly from the time it was introduced. The original bill called for specific responsibilities of the director of planning and GDOT, the development of a State Public Transportation Fund, the change in the provisions for the balancing and allocation of state and federal funds, the suspension of the MARTA 50/50 restriction, and the creation of special tax districts and regional referenda held on the date of the first presidential preference primary for a one percent sales tax for a period of eight years. The House Committee on Transportation offered a substitute to the bill, which added responsibilities for the GDOT Commissioner, public meetings during discussion of the investment list, the ability for governments to approve a regional tax through a resolution or ordinance, the creation of a Transit Governance Study Commission to address future legislation for transit governance, and the date of the referenda to be held with the general primary in 2012 to last a period of 10 years [35].

House Bill 277

In March 2010, the conference committee favorably substituted a previous bill that had already been introduced in the 2009 session, House Bill 277. Though the two bills actually

did not differ substantially, House Bill 277 had progressed much further than House Bill 1218 in the legislative process. By the next month, House Bill 277 was passed by the House and Senate. The House voted 141 Yea - 29 Nay and the Senate voted 43 Yea - 8 Nay. House Bill 277 was signed by Governor Perdue on June 2nd, 2010.

House Bill 277 included the following significant features:

- Creation of 12 special tax districts corresponding to the boundaries of existing regional commissions for a 1 percent sales tax subject to the requirement of referendum approval to be imposed for a period of 10 years;
- MARTA shall not be authorized to use proceeds of the sales tax for maintenance and operations costs of existing infrastructure;
- 25 percent of the proceeds shall go to local governments within the district which the tax is levied. 15 percent of the proceeds shall go to local governments wholly contained within a single MPO (this only applied to Atlanta). The remaining proceeds would fund a project list in each district;
- Regional transportation roundtable for each special district consisting of two representatives from each county (one chairperson, sole commissioner, mayor or CEO of the county governing authority and one mayor elected by the mayors);
- Counties with more than 90 percent of the population residing in municipal corporations shall have the mayor serve as an additional representative (this only applied to Atlanta);
- The regional transportation roundtable shall elect five representatives to serve as an executive committee;
- The GDOT director of planning, a position created in the legislation, shall write the state recommended criteria for the investment list of transportation projects by November 15, 2010;
- Any amendment or approval of criteria shall be enacted by a majority vote of present members of the regional transportation roundtable;

- After approval of criteria, a report shall be provided to local governments, MPOs, local legislators, and the GDOT commissioner. Upon receipt of the report, the parties shall submit projects to the GDOT director of planning;
- The GDOT director of planning shall “assemble a list of example investments” for each district’s investment criteria and submit the list to each executive committee for consideration;
- A fiscally constrained draft list shall be developed and delivered by the executive committee and GDOT director of planning by August 15, 2011;
- The draft investment list shall be considered by the regional transportation roundtable and approved by a majority of present members;
- At least two public meetings must be held prior to the final regional transportation roundtable meeting;
- The final investment list shall be delivered by October 15, 2011;
- The first election shall be held on the general statewide primary in 2012 (exact wording provided in the legislation);
- Change in matching requirements for GDOT local maintenance and improvement grants based on passage of the referendum (see section 4.1.7);
- The approval of the tax shall not diminish alternative funds allocated to the district and shall not be subject to congressional balancing;
- Collection of the tax shall begin on the first day of the next quarter and shall cease either on the final day of the 10-year period or at the point the collections equals the estimated amount to be raised [78].

A complete list of topics addressed in the legislation and a copy of House Bill 277 is provided in Appendix B.

2.2.12 Summary

The history of the Atlanta region has continually centered on transportation investment and issues which have shaped current transportation policy. Changes in federal and state gas tax revenue have recently caused a noticeable transportation crisis in the region. The main solution from the Georgia legislature was either a regional or statewide transportation sales tax, the specifics to be argued over for three legislative sessions. A series of political compromises led to the Transportation Investment Act of 2010. Once the bill passed into law, the twelve regions entered into the first phase of the process. The next chapter provides a detailed case study of the Atlanta region as it moved through each of the phases outlined in the Transportation Investment Act of 2010.

Chapter III

CASE STUDY OF THE ATLANTA REGION

The Atlanta region is the most diverse and complicated region of the 12 regions designated by the Transportation Investment Act of 2010. The Atlanta region is a 10-County area of over 4.18 million people, a population which is still larger than 24 states in the United States [13]. The region, as shown in Figure 3, consists of the City of Atlanta, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, and Rockdale Counties.

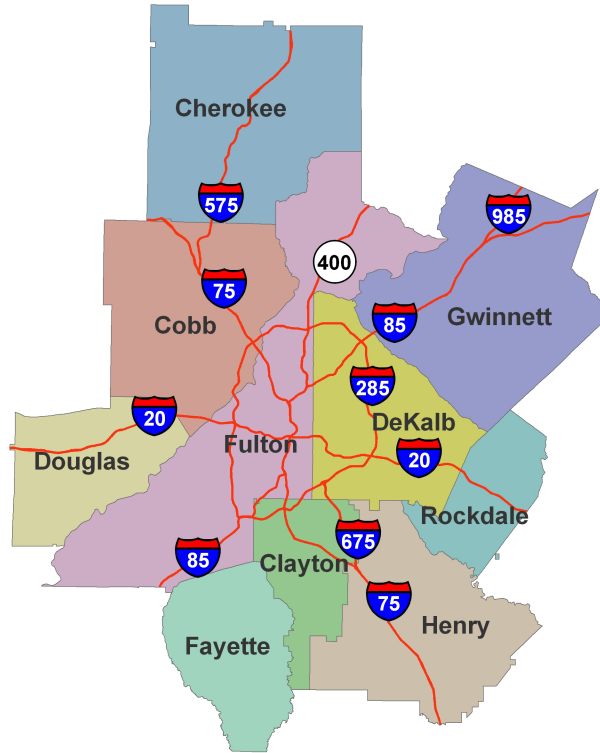


Figure 5: The 10-County Atlanta Region [13]

As shown in Figure 6, the region is home to a mix of urban, suburban, and exurban jurisdictions, each of which requires unique transportation solutions. As mentioned in chapter 2, the Atlanta region includes Interstate 285 and Interstate 20. Also, the city of Atlanta

is the meeting point for Interstate 75 and Interstate 85. Portions of Interstate 85 include HOT lanes, with future HOT lanes planned for portions of Interstate 75. The Atlanta region is also home to GA 400, a commuter toll road. Fulton and DeKalb Counties house and fund the MARTA system through a one percent sales tax. Cobb and Gwinnett Counties operate their own transit systems, Cobb County Transit (CCT) and Gwinnett County Transit (GCT) offering bus and paratransit services. GRTA operates an Xpress commuter bus service in 12 counties of the 20-County Atlanta region.

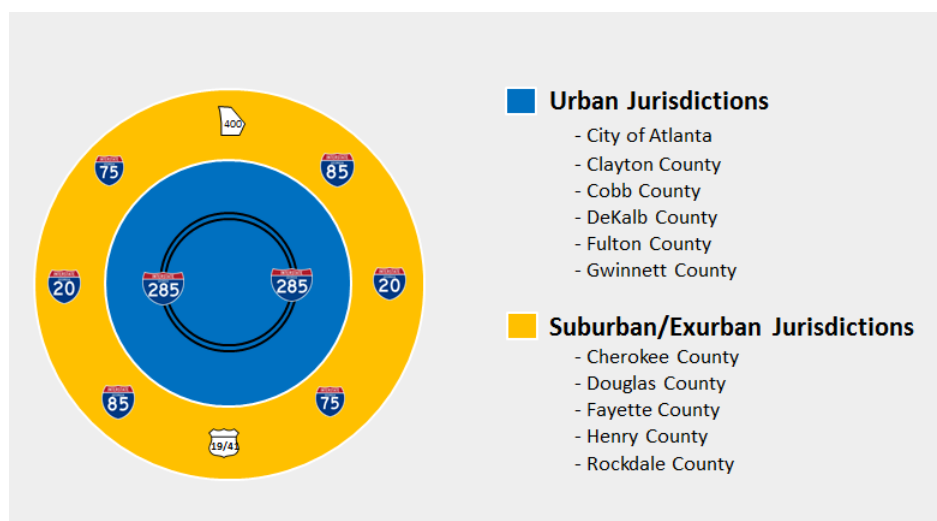


Figure 6: Urban, Suburban, and Exurban Jurisdictions

According to the Texas Transportation Institute’s 2012 Urban Mobility Report, Atlanta currently ranks 7th worst in the nation for annual yearly auto delay per commuter. Atlanta ranks near the top 10 worst for most every other congestion measure in the report [73]. Over the last several years, Georgia has averaged 48th in transportation spending per capita. The limited funding and increased congestion has made Atlanta home to seven of the worst bottlenecks in the nation [6].

3.1 Demographic Snapshot

Using 2010 Census data, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), the Atlanta region’s MPO, reported that 38.5 percent of the 10-County Atlanta region’s total population lived in cities, an increase of 20 percent when compared to 2000 Census data [31]. In addition,

the trend of unequal population gain in the northern part of the suburbs, as discussed in chapter 2, is continuing. The second development ring in the North contained the most substantial population gains [31].

The Atlanta region is experiencing a large shift in its racial and ethnic profile. As shown in Figure 7, the region's racial makeup has changed significantly from just the "White" and Non-White" populations reported in the Census prior to the 1950s; the Atlanta region is now home to an ever increasing number of individuals identifying as Black, as well as Asian and Hispanic. In fact, the growth of non-White populations was far more substantial than the growth of the White population in the 10-County Atlanta region. The Black population has increased by more than any other race and ethnicity. Population changes over the past decade show a trend of more Blacks moving to the suburbs. Seven of the 10 counties actually lost White population. Six counties are now majority non-White [31]. The figure shows that the distribution of race and ethnic groups follows distinct patterns. As shown, the White population is mostly concentrated in the outer counties and north of Interstate 20. The Black population is mostly concentrated south of Interstate 20. The Asian population is concentrated in the Johns Creek/Gwinnett area, with pockets in Clayton and east Cobb. Also, The Hispanic population is mostly concentrated in Gwinnett, Cobb, and Hall Counties.

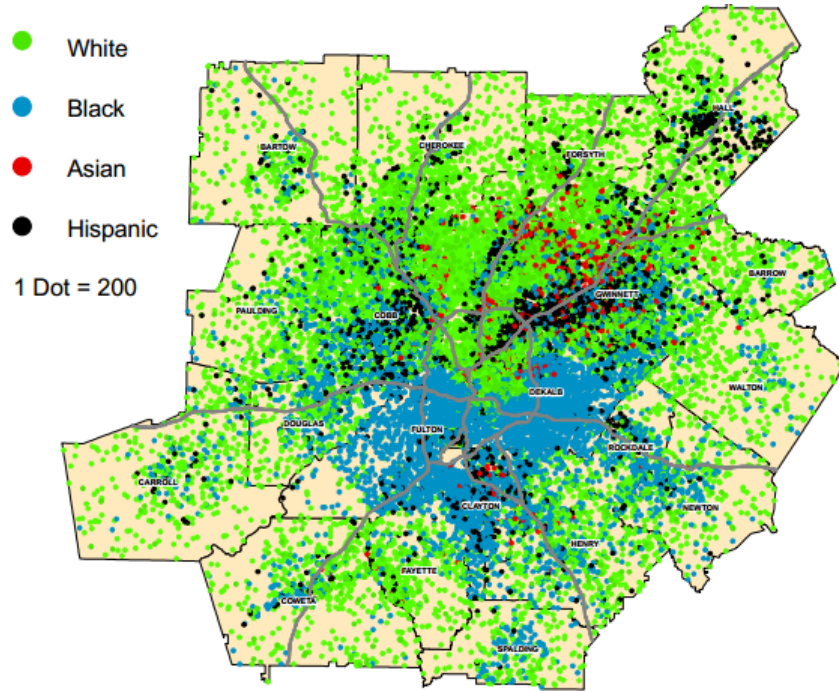


Figure 7: 2010 Census Distributions of Race and Ethnic Groups in 20-County Atlanta Region [31]

The Atlanta region is also experiencing a shift in age. The number of individuals over the age of 65 along with the number of children in the 20-County Atlanta region is expected to increase substantially by the year 2040, as shown in Figure 8. According to the Atlanta region's Regional Transportation Plan, this shift will increase the demand for alternative transportation modes [83].

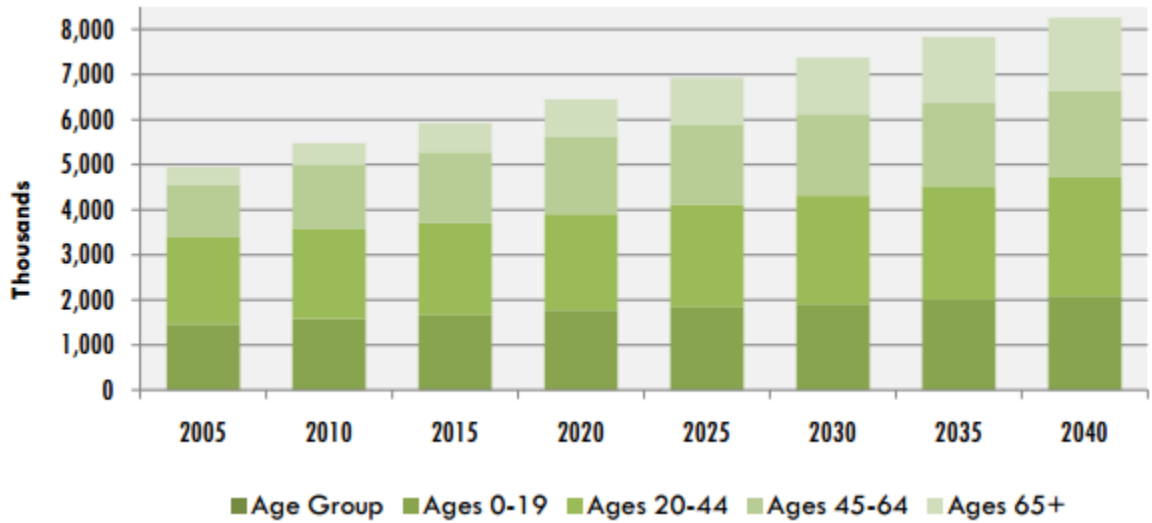


Figure 8: Expected Growth by Age Group in the 20-County Atlanta Region [83]

In addition to projecting over 8 million residents by the year 2040, the Atlanta region's Regional Transportation Plan anticipates a substantial increase in regional travel demand, illustrated in Figure 9. By year 2040, projections indicate an increase in congested vehicle hours traveled to approximately 110 percent in the 20-County Atlanta region [83].

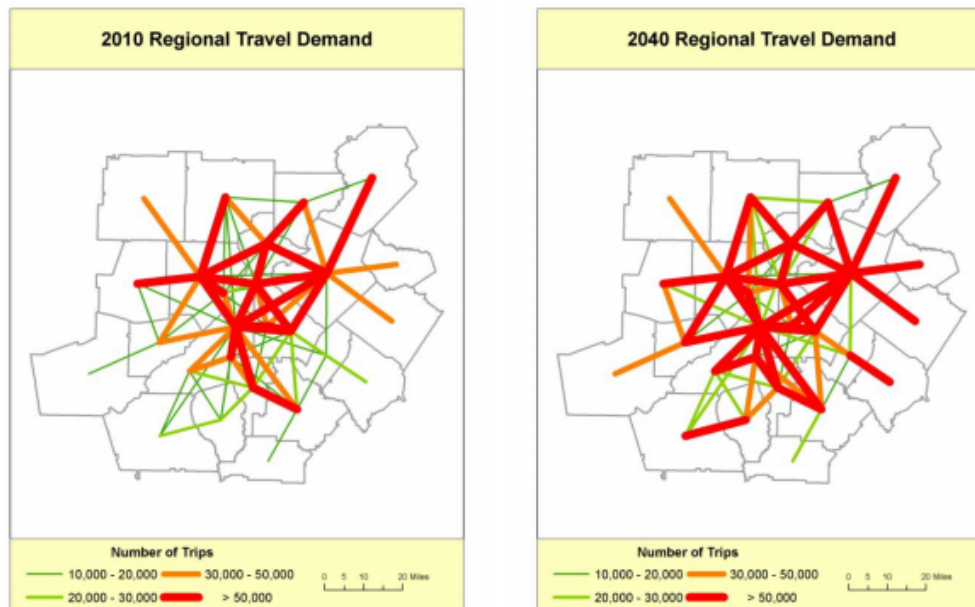


Figure 9: 2010 and 2040 Regional Travel Demand [83]

Effects of the recession can be seen in the data with a marked increase from 10 percent to 18 percent of city-wide vacancies in the city of Atlanta [31]. Figure 10 shows the 2010 Census Percent Vacant, meaning the number of vacant housing units (as a percentage of all housing units), in the 20-County Atlanta region.

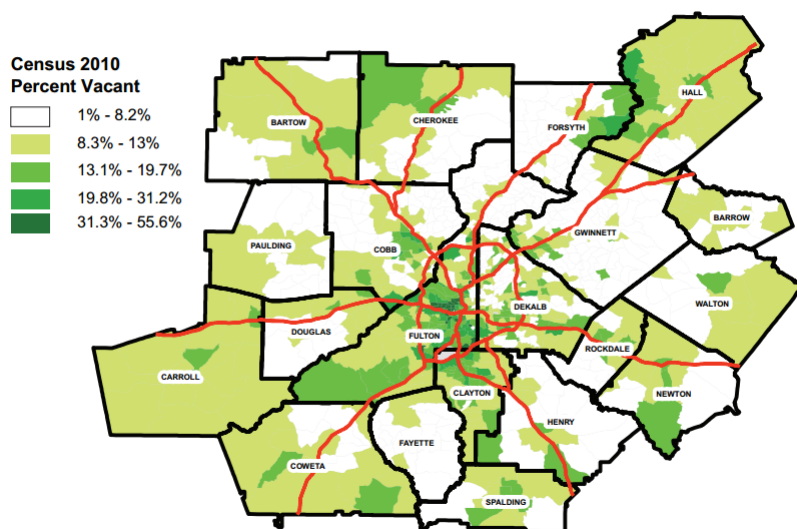


Figure 10: 2010 Census Percent Vacant in 20-County Atlanta Region [31]

Though the business community and job market were negatively impacted by the recession, many believe the recession had a positive impact on growth and congestion in the region, arguing that the lack of investment in transportation would have caused a much more serious congestion issue with a continuation of growth levels before the recession. Once the recession hit, growth slowed and the lack of transportation investment went relatively unnoticed by the general public.

3.2 The Atlanta Regional Transportation Roundtable

As designated by the Transportation Investment Act of 2010, the Regional Transportation Roundtable (RTR) for each special district was to consist of two representatives from each county (one chairperson, sole commissioner, mayor or CEO of the county governing authority and one mayor elected by the mayors). The Atlanta region qualified for one portion of the legislation with Fulton County having more than 90 percent of the population residing in

municipal corporations [78]. Because of this qualification, Mayor Kasim Reed of Atlanta served as an additional representative on the Atlanta RTR. Each county's representatives of the 21 member RTR are geographically shown in Figure 11.

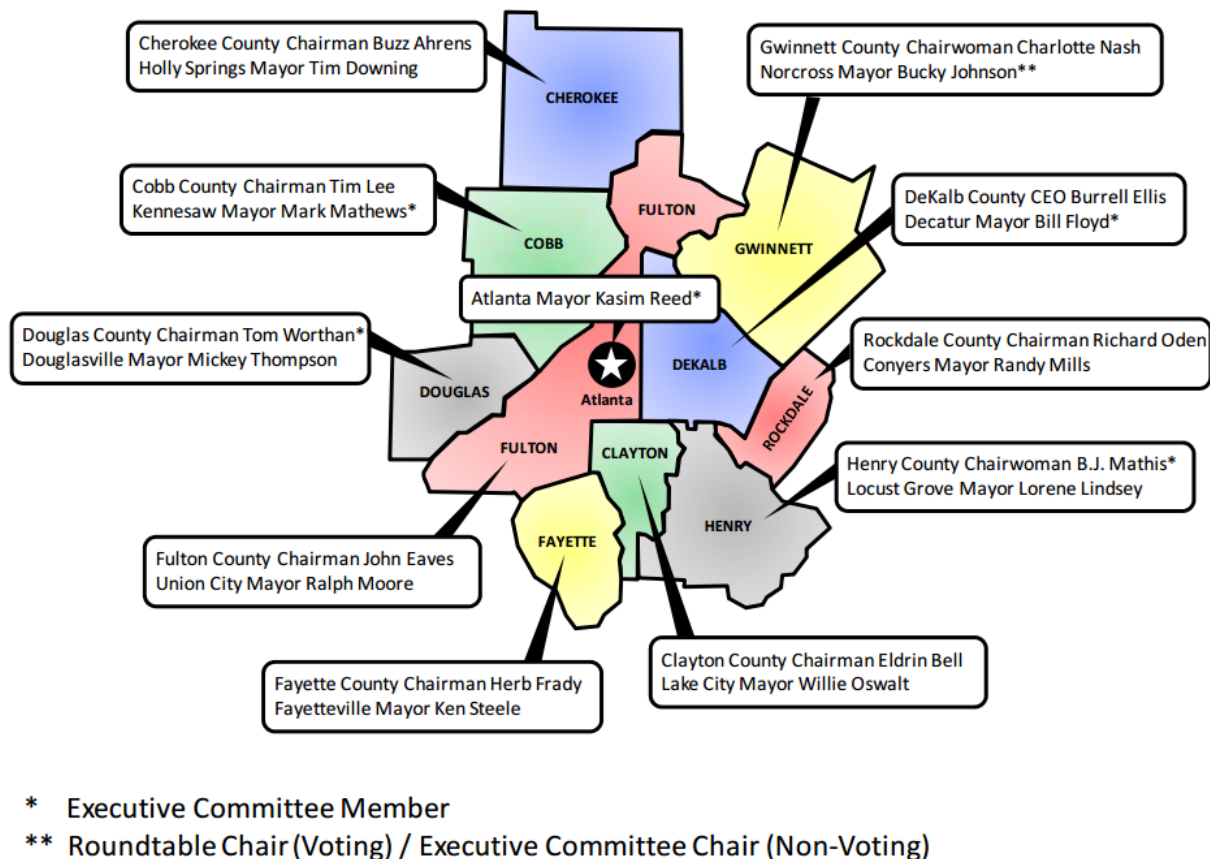


Figure 11: Atlanta Regional Transportation Roundtable Representatives [36]

3.3 *Four Phases of Plan*

The process laid out in the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 provided four separate phases for completion. Figure 12 shows the four step process followed by each of the twelve regions. The following sections provide a detailed documentation and discussion of the Atlanta region as it progressed through the first three phases. However, given that the Atlanta region failed to pass the referendum, the project delivery stage was never completed.

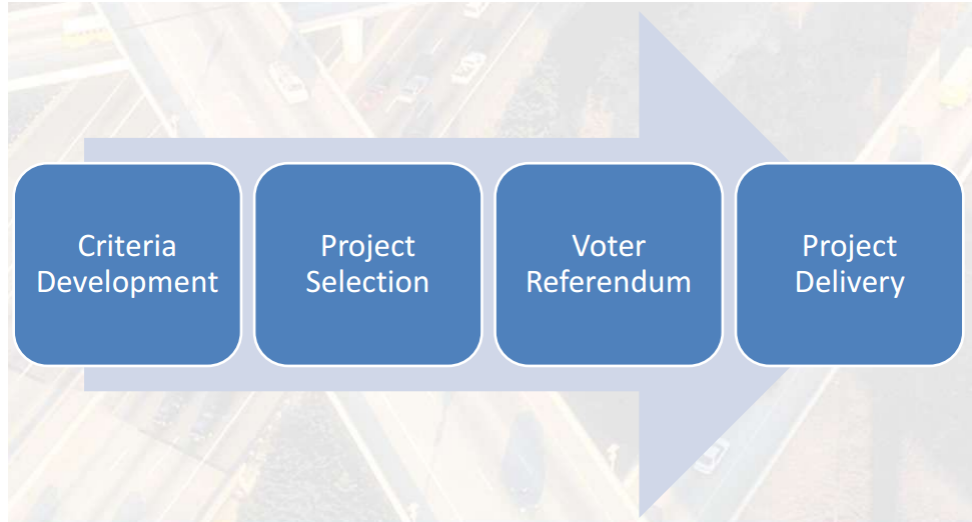


Figure 12: Four Phases of Plan [84]

3.4 Criteria Development

The GDOT director of planning was given responsibilities in the majority of the development steps for the constrained draft investment list, including the development of draft criteria. Given that the GDOT director of planning was appointed by the governor, the heavy involvement of the GDOT director of planning served as a check for the governor’s office during the project selection process.

3.4.1 Draft Criteria

As laid out by the legislation, the GDOT director of planning was given the responsibility to draft criteria for the investment list of transportation projects. The GDOT director of planning drafted the criteria and issued it to local governments and MPOs on August 3, 2010. All criteria excluded the 25 percent local share (15 percent for Atlanta) portion of the sales tax revenue. All 11 districts outside Atlanta were given the same draft criteria (see Appendix C) [86].

The draft criteria for the Atlanta 10-County region had three main requirements: (1) the list should be a strategic use of funds for achieving the best value; (2) projects should be delivered on-time and on-budget; and (3) the projects must have public support including public trust that “state and local governments will deliver on their promises” [85]. Under the

draft criteria, projects must originate from existing plans and/or studies while also being consistent with the policies of the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan and the Atlanta region's PLAN 2040. In addition, projects must appeal to a broad range of citizens while encouraging multimodal solutions. The draft criteria also allocated target ranges for the program areas. Table 3 shows the target ranges for each respective program area.

Table 3: Program Areas and Allocation Ranges for Draft Criteria [85]

Program Areas	Target Ranges
Roadway Capital	20 - 50 %
Transit Capital	10 - 40 %
Transit Operations and Maintenance	5 - 20 %
Safety	5 - 10 %
Traffic Operations	2 - 5 %
Non-motorized (Bike/Pedestrian)	0 - 5 %
Freight and Logistics	0 - 2 %
Aviation	0 - 2 %
Roadway and Bridge Maintenance (Asset Management)	0 - 5 %

The draft criteria recommended that prioritization of the project selection should be based on three levels for roadway capital projects: (1) Tier One projects have construction phases beginning within six years of the start of the regional sales tax; (2) Tier Two projects have an approved concept report; (3) Tier Three have been recommended but do not have Tier One or Tier Two qualifications [85]. For transit capital projects, projects which provide the most economic benefit, environmental benefit, and were the most feasible during environmental permitting according to the ARC, the GDOT director of planning, and GRTA were recommended to be given the utmost consideration. Emphasis for the construction phase was recommended to be placed on both transit and roadway projects. A number of specifics for transit projects were provided in the draft criteria:

- Should have contingency plan if future operating funds are based on renewal of sales

tax;

- Should have independent utility;
- Should have transit service in more than one county;
- Should have connection to employment and activity centers in the Atlanta region;
- Should serve areas with land use ordinance that “enable increased development densities around stops and stations”;
- Capital expenditures are allowed to be new, systematic replacement, upgrades, refurbishment, and others [85].

The draft criteria focused on a three-level project selection categorization: (1) Tier One projects should have an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) anticipated, an approved draft environmental document, or an FTA-approved Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) and Alternatives Analysis (AA) to be completed by the end of FY 2012; (2) Tier Two projects should have a feasibility study; and (3) Tier Three have been recommended but do not have Tier One or Tier Two qualifications [85]. Seven other program areas were also defined and given recommendations for project selection (see Appendix C).

3.4.2 Approved Criteria

Comments on the draft criteria were to be submitted by local governments, MPOs, and legislators by September 30, 2010. The ARC and GDOT provided responses to each comment [88]. The regional criteria were then developed based on the “refined” version, which was finally vetted by members of the Atlanta RTR via conference calls [87]. The RTR approved the criteria by a majority vote of present members on December 17, 2010, the first official meeting of the Atlanta RTR. The final criteria added a fourth goal, “Investments should improve regional mobility.” In addition, four performance goals from the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan were given for project selection:

- Support Georgia’s economic growth and competitiveness;
- Ensure safety and security;

- Maximize the value of Georgia’s assets, getting the most out of the existing network;
- Minimize the environmental impact [87].

The development of the project list was to be guided by the following additional principles:

- Regional equity was to be measured by outcomes not project cost;
- “Package projects” could be included to address connectivity issues [87].

Lastly, the projects would be evaluated on the following additional criteria (for a full list of criteria, see Appendix C):

- Emphasis on construction phase or capital equipment acquisition (all other phases will be given preference based on ability to be completed within 10-years);
- Each project phase included in the list must demonstrate full funding and construction funds must be in PLAN 2040;
- Emphasis on delivery in the 10-year time frame, recommending that 40 percent should be completed or underway within six years of the 10-year period;
- Roadway capital projects should serve origins or destinations for existing and proposed employment and activity centers as well as serve to reduce congestion in regional corridors;
- New fixed-guideway facilities for transit should include a 20-year operating plan [87].

A report giving the approved criteria and revenue projections was provided to local governments, MPOs, local legislators, and the GDOT commissioner. Upon receipt of the report, the parties began to submit projects to the GDOT director of planning; suggestions were due to GDOT by March 30, 2011.

3.5 Project Selection

The project selection process was hard-coded into the Transportation Investment Act of 2010. The majority of deadlines were listed directly in the bill. A strict process was followed

from late 2010 to the vote on July 31, 2012. Figure 13 diagrams the project list development process.

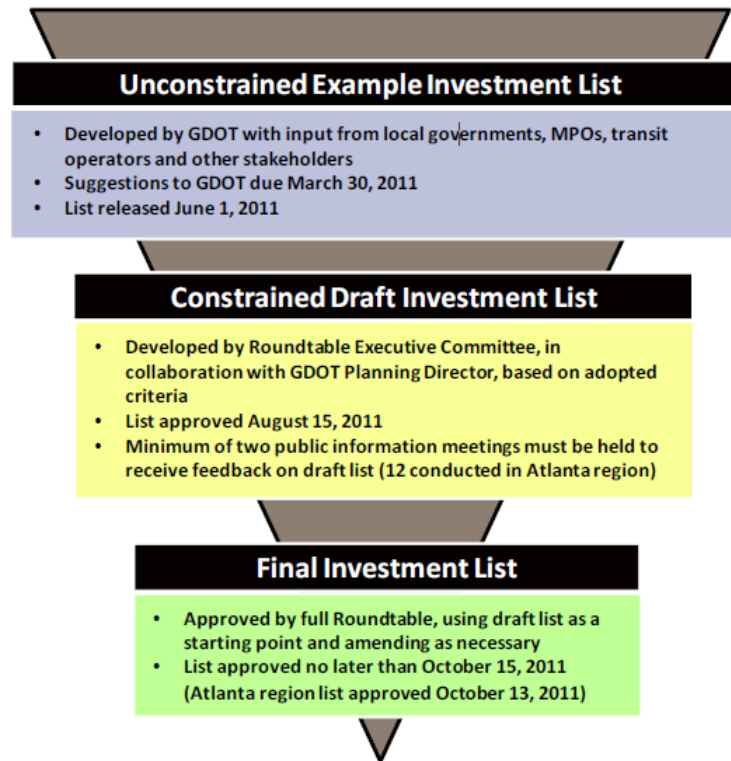


Figure 13: Project Investment List Development Process [36]

3.5.1 Unconstrained Example Investment List

Four hundred and thirty seven complete forms were submitted to the GDOT director of planning. [89] The unconstrained example investment list was developed by the GDOT director of planning along with the collaboration of the ARC staff, using the submitted projects and approved criteria. The initial list of projects was not fiscally constrained by the projected budget. The unconstrained example investment list of projects was then given to the executive committee for further development on June 1, 2011 [36].

3.5.2 The Executive Committee

The executive committee was elected during the first meeting of the Atlanta RTR. Five members were to serve as voting members. In addition, the executive committee included

non-voting members of the General Assembly. The legislation required the appointment of only three state officials. However, four state officials participated with three additional alternates. The House had two representatives and the Senate had two representatives. The three alternates were all from the Senate.

The full roundtable approved five voting members:

- B.J. Mathis, Chair, Henry County Commission;
- Tom Worthan, Chair, Douglas County Commission;
- Bill Floyd, Mayor, Decatur;
- Bucky Johnson, Mayor, Norcross;
- Mark Mathews, Mayor, Kennesaw.

However, this was not the final make-up of the executive committee. Many members of the state leadership and the RTR were angered by this decision because the Mayor of Atlanta was not elected to the executive committee. Also, an underlying tension between cities and counties was causing ripples in the RTR. The cities did not want the bigger counties to have undue influence in the project selection process. Members had already selected and garnered enough support for a list of members to serve on the executive committee, a list that did not include people who “hadn’t been as active” in ARC [20]. Many members of the RTR suggested the main reason not including Mayor Reed was for his regular absence from previous ARC meetings.

The resulting executive committee excluded representation from areas that were considered crucial for successful implementation such as the city of Atlanta, Fulton, DeKalb, and Gwinnett Counties. According to those interviewed, Mayor Reed was instrumental in the passage of the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 during his time in the state legislature. Many believed it was a mistake to exclude such a strong supporter saying that without his support, the referendum had no chance of passing. The process almost stopped in its tracks. When no executive committee members responded to requests from the ARC Chairman for

them to step down so as to include Mayor Reed, the Speaker of the House called a meeting. The Speaker felt that if there was any chance of the referendum passing, the Mayor of Atlanta must be included on the executive committee. Many recall him being very firm and saying “get it done.” A decision was made by Mayor Bucky Johnson of Norcross to step down as a voting member of the committee. Instead, he would serve as the non-voting chair of the committee. Though the position was not listed in the legislation, the flexibility was allowed to create the position given that Mayor Johnson would not be a voting member. Therefore, the final approved executive committee included the following:

- Bucky Johnson, Mayor, Norcross (non-voting Chair);
- Kasim Reed, Mayor, Atlanta;
- B.J. Mathis, Chair, Henry County Commission;
- Tom Worthan, Chair, Douglas County Commission;
- Bill Floyd, Mayor, Decatur;
- Mark Mathews, Mayor, Kennesaw.

The 4 non-voting legislators were Representative Mike Jacobs (District 80), Representative Sean Jerguson (District 22), Senator Chip Rogers (District 21), and Senator Jack Murphy (District 27). The three alternates were Senator Valencia Seay, Senator Doug Stoner, and Senator Renee Unterman [36]. In addition, the majority of the RTR members attended the executive committee meetings and contributed to discussions.

Mayor Bucky Johnson, the non-voting Chair, received high praise for his work on the executive committee. The majority of those interviewed mentioned the addition of a non-voting Chair as a main reason for the impressive functionality of the executive committee. Even though the non-voting Chair was not part of the legislation, the flexibility to approve a non-voting Chair was a favorable addition to the legislation and project selection process.

3.5.3 Atlanta Regional Commission Staff

The ARC provided staff members who remained involved throughout the project selection process. During the first meeting of the Atlanta RTR, ARC staff was designated to serve in a support role to help the group meet the requirements of the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 [36]. The ARC had already been involved with the process through collaboration with GDOT on the compilation of the unconstrained draft investment list. Upon receipt of the unconstrained draft investment list, the executive committee designated the ARC staff to perform analysis and reduce the list further. Working together with staff from local governments and state agencies, the ARC reduced the unconstrained draft investment list from a total of \$22.9 billion down to a total of \$12.2 billion. During the executive committee meetings, the ARC staff was called upon to provide presentations and answer questions per the request of the Chair, Mayor Bucky Johnson. The majority of executive committee members praised the hard work by the ARC staff for the high level of thinking and functionality provided during the entire project selection process.

3.5.4 The Constrained Draft Investment List

After the list was reduced, the executive committee met a total of nine times to determine a constrained draft investment list. The RTR was convened an additional three times [36]. During the executive committee meetings, the majority of RTR members, local officials, and legislators attended and were active. Also, the meetings were open and attended by the general public.

The executive committee removed county lines from the maps used during discussions. A graphic dividing the Atlanta region into 10 sectors was used instead, as shown in Figure 14. A categorization of subregion was used for each project on the project list. The subregion for each project would be one of the 10 sectors or be categorized as “regional” [6]. In addition, each project was categorized by “Anticipated Schedule for Beginning Construction or Implementation.” Each project was categorized in Band 1 (2013 - 2015), Band 2 (2016 - 2019), or Band 3 (2020 - 2022) [6].

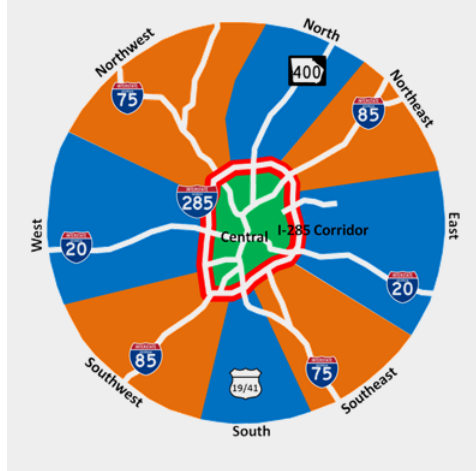


Figure 14: 10 Sectors of the Atlanta Region [6]

Three scenarios were given by the ARC staff for the executive committee to use during deliberations. Scenario A showed a constrained list with an emphasis on roadway projects. Scenario B showed a constrained list with a more balanced investment list. Scenario C showed a constrained list with an emphasis on transit projects. The ARC also provided modeling capabilities to show congestion mitigation and other important factors for specific projects. Scenario models were run to determine how the list affected underserved populations, a model which received high marks [2]. Many members remember relying heavily on the ARC staff for determining the regional impact of different projects through modeling and analysis. Though the majority of the members of the executive committee mentioned holding regional significance as the highest priority, other priorities also were considered such as needs of particular constituency, overall congestion mitigation, and economic competitiveness. Analysis and deal-making was typically done outside of the traditional meetings. Regular attendees mentioned the silence and low key nature of the actual meetings. Votes were usually quick and unanimous. Multiple deals were struck to make both sides happy. All members recall being satisfied with the list from the standpoint of their constituency as well as the regional priorities of the RTR. Even with the heavy involvement of the ARC staff in the project selection process, some still criticize the political nature of the executive committee meetings as well as the final project list.

3.5.5 The Final Investment List

Amendments

After the fiscally constrained draft list of \$6.14 billion was developed and delivered unanimously by the executive committee on August 15, 2011, four additional RTR meetings were held to discuss amendments [36]. Around the same time, 10 official public meetings were held across the Atlanta region to provide for public input into the project list before final approval (the legislation required two public meetings). All amendments had to be cost neutral, meaning no change could increase or decrease the final project list cost of \$6.14 billion when implemented. Ultimately, six amendments passed. One amendment, the Cobb County Northwest Corridor project, was the source of controversy at the time. The fixed guideway project from Midtown to Cumberland would have provided transit service to Cobb County, an area which has had a long standing contention with transit service (previously discussed in chapter 2). The amendment would reduce the funding for the transit line, instead putting it toward a bus service from the Town Center area to connect with MARTA in Midtown Atlanta. The rest of the money which was originally slated for the project would go toward intersection improvements at three intersections in Cobb County. Each of the proposals was drafted following discussions with the public. However, the amendment for the Northwest Corridor project received a great deal of media attention and controversy. Regardless, all six amendments passed and the final project list was moved forward for a final approval.

Unanimous

The last meeting was held on October 13, 2011 where the final package of amendments and documentation was approved along with the final investment list [36]. The full roundtable voted unanimously in favor of the final investment list. After a seemingly rocky start, the project selection process ended on a political high note. Many members of the RTR recall the day being magical. All members, representatives from a diverse group of counties, were able to come together and agree on one project list. At the time, spirits were high for the staff and representatives who worked on the project list. Many considered this to be a historic moment for the region, a huge step forward in regional thinking. Others joked that it was

the nature of the body and did not truly represent the agreement of the entire body. One legislator noted that “it was never going to be anything other than near unanimous because of the nature of the body” [3]. A unanimous vote just means the RTR “all got together and made a pinky promise that they are going to support” the project list and referendum. The RTR must “speak with one voice” [3].

Specifics of the Final Investment List

The final investment list totaled to \$6.14 billion in current year dollars (\$7.2 billion adjusted to year of expenditure). The project list included 157 projects. Table 4 gives a percentage breakdown of the projects included in the project list. Notably, the project list devoted over 52 percent of the funding to transit.

Table 4: Category Percentages of Atlanta Region Final Investment List [36]

Category	Allocation	Percentage
Transit	\$3,159,892,477	51.5 %
Roadway	\$2,903,019,900	47.3 %
Roadway/Transit	\$50,000,000	0.8 %
Bike/Pedestrian	\$24,070,000	0.4 %
Aviation	\$3,190,000	0.1 %
Total	\$6,140,172,377	100 %

Figure 15 shows the projects geographically across the 10-County Atlanta region.

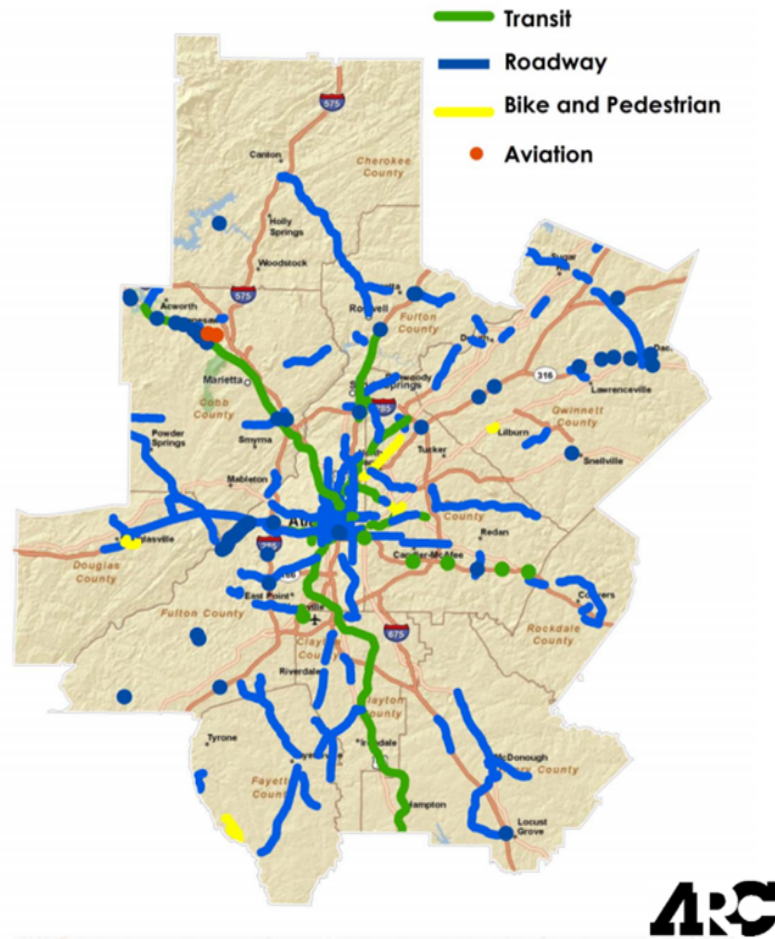


Figure 15: Geographic Atlanta Region Final Investment List [6]

A list of all projects on the final investment list is included in Appendix D.

3.5.6 Public Involvement

According to the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 Final Report and the ARC, the entire process involved more than 200,000 residents. The ARC reported activities and approximate connections are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Activities between August 2010 and October 2011 [36]

Activity	Approximate Connections
Comments on draft criteria (August/September 2010)	170
Public comments on PLAN 2040 outreach process related to TIA (January - June 2011)	300
Regional Transportation Roundtable website visits (May - October 2011)	26,605
Email Alert sign-ups (May - October 2011)	2,463
Participants in twelve University of Georgia focus groups (March/April 2011)	126
Respondents to Kennesaw State University Quality of Life Survey (April 2011)	1,100
Attendees at five monthly community briefings (April - October 2011)	150
Respondents to Roundtable online survey (May - July 2011)	9,812
Participants in an AARP telephone town hall (May 2011)	11,000
Participants in Roundtable telephone town halls (June 2011)	134,405
Respondents to Roundtable online survey (July 2011)	496
Attendees at local elected officials briefings (July 2011)	280
Respondents to Roundtable online survey (August 2011)	199
Attendees to 12 Regional Transportation Forums (September 2011)	1,698
Public comments received (August - October 2011)	684
Respondents to Draft Investment List online survey (September - October 2011)	1,392
Various community meetings (2011)	800 +

During roundtable meetings, public comment was allowed. However, many criticized the structure of the public comment. Any interested in public comment had to sign up before the meeting. As well, the public comment was restricted to a short two minute time frame during the “public comment period,” usually held at the beginning of the meetings. Meetings were announced publicly at least a week prior to the meeting. Opponents complained that they were shut out of the process by not being selected. While their comments were submitted in writing during the meetings, some opponents recall not having their questions answered. ARC staff disagrees with the complaints, arguing that the meetings were designed

to allow for public comment on both sides. Members of the RTR mentioned a number of influential public groups and demographics during the public comment process. Groups such as seniors, bike and pedestrian advocates, transit advocates, and concerned individuals were listed as strong voices during the project selection process. Not one member of the RTR mentioned opposition as an influential group during the project selection process. However, some members of the business community were not shocked by the type of opposition who came out against the referendum later in the process given that some public comment foreshadowed the future opposition.

3.5.7 Transparency

Those interviewed noted the transparency of the project selection process. Multiple websites documented and discussed the Transportation Investment Act of 2010, project selection process, and referendum. The process was “paperless” meaning all documents were posted to the internet and were open for public access. In addition, many fact sheets and one-page summaries were disseminated to make the process more understandable to the general public. The ARC provided interactive mapping of the final project list as well as videos touring the different subregions of the Atlanta region. All RTR meetings were recorded and posted on the website. Acronyms were removed and explained in all documents on the primary website.

3.6 *The Campaign*

The Atlanta region slowly entered into the public awareness and advocacy phase of the process. The proponents and the opponents began to emerge as active community members decided if they were pro-TSPLOST or anti-TSPLOST. The term TSPLOST was used by the media and became a common phrase during the campaign. A lot of organizations in the region stayed neutral because they either did not want to support some of the projects or they did not want to lose their tax status by going on record through advocacy. The strongest members of the proponents and opponents are detailed in the following subsections.

3.6.1 Proponents

On paper, the big name support for the proponents seemed to be all they would require to secure 50 plus one of the votes in the Atlanta region. Not only did the proponents have the wallets and hearts of the business community, they had the support of influential legislators, local officials, the Mayor of Atlanta, and the Governor of Georgia.

The Atlanta Business Community

The business community had no stance on the project list. Instead, the business community focused on the idea that it was up to each community to decide through proper education. The members of the Chamber of Commerce were educated so that they could speak accurately to their respective communities [5]. The business community began to raise money for an official campaign while conducting focus groups “to emphasize the importance of the referendum” [5]. According to a representative, the business community felt it was important to raise money from an outreach perspective, so that voters would understand the importance of the referendum to the future of the region [5].

The Campaign

The business community had been planning the campaign since mid-2010, pulling in businesses and community organizations in a July 2010 big tent kickoff [27]. The group also met every first Friday to inform members and receive input. Around 100 organizations were involved in these first Friday meetings.

According to a member, the campaign consulted with CRL Associates, the company who ran the campaign in Denver for their FasTracks transit referendum. CRL Associates was used by the business community, and later the official campaign, to gain ideas and suggestions about how to set up the campaign [27]. Given that campaign rules were different in Georgia when compared to Denver, an attorney was hired to analyze the proper structuring of the campaign [27]. It was determined that the campaign had to be divided up into two different organizations. The campaign was structured into a C3, that can only educate, and a C4, that can advocate. The education campaign was officially named the Metro

Atlanta Voter Education Network (MAVEN) and set up as a non-profit corporation with the Secretary of State. The advocacy campaign was named Citizens for Transportation Mobility (CTM) and set up as a registered fund-raising committee with the Georgia Government Transparency and Campaign Finance Commission [27]. The two campaigns had the same working group with a separate board of community leaders for each of the two campaigns. The campaign hired three strategists, two Republicans and one Democrat. The campaign also hired communications and other important staff to help implement strategies. By September 2011, the two campaigns were officially structured and the necessary campaign staff had been hired [27]. Figure 16 shows the structure of the official campaign for the transportation referendum.

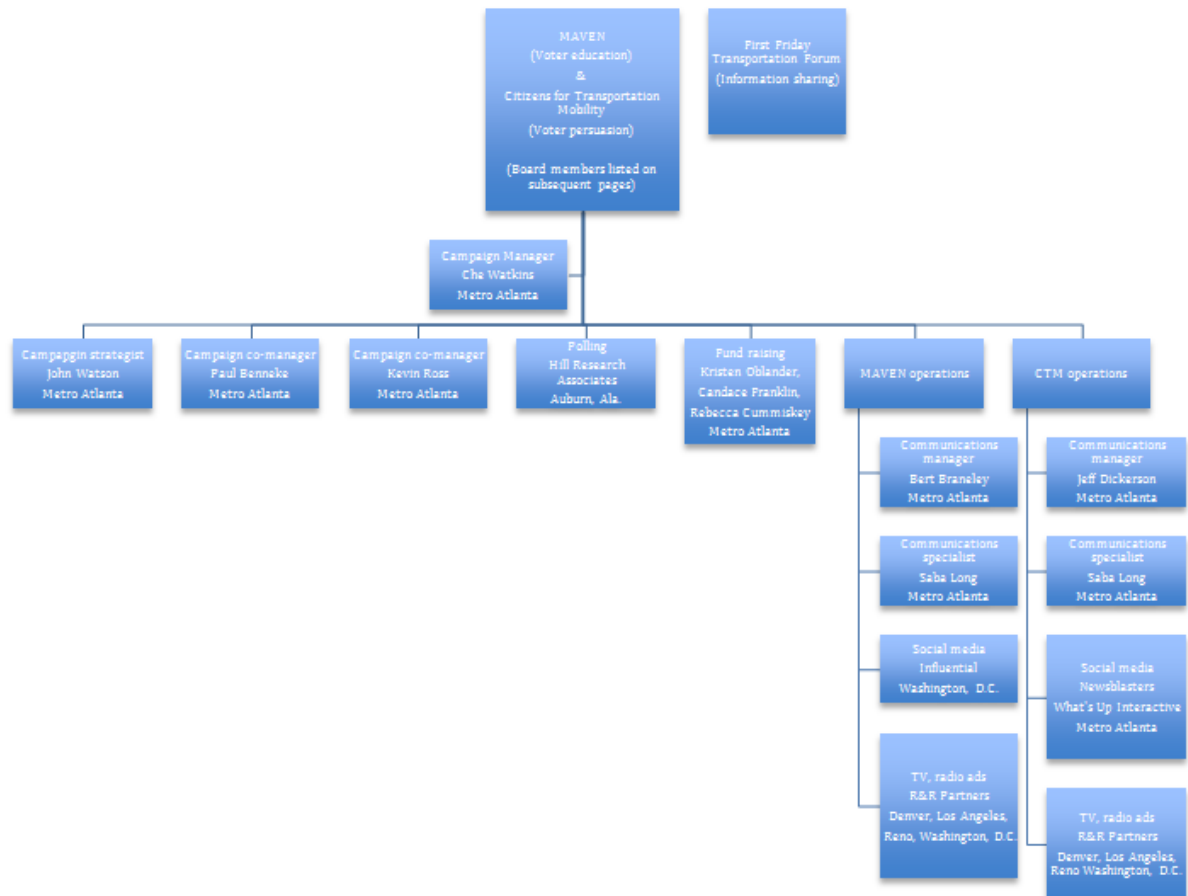


Figure 16: Structure of Official Campaign [69]

MAVEN and CTM

The campaign strategy for MAVEN was to educate voters through April of 2012. The advocacy side, CTM, would then start a “persuasion campaign” to convince voters to get to the polls in support of the referendum [69]. MAVEN approached the education side by calling the TSPLOST “one solution” to Atlanta’s traffic woes [47]. MAVEN sent educated speakers out across the region to give presentations which covered topics such as the transportation history and background of the region, the legislation, and the project list. MAVEN funded education efforts as well as “some get-out-the-vote efforts.” MAVEN was not legally required to disclose its contributors and raised close to \$2.1 million, of which \$1.5 million originated from community improvement districts (CIDs). [47].

The campaign strategy for CTM was to advocate for passage of the one percent sales tax, campaigning on behalf of the question that was posed on the ballot [69]. It was more difficult to raise money for the advocacy side given that many organizations could not or did not want to donate to advocacy. By law, the campaign must disclose donors and expenses to the ethics board 14 days prior to the referendum. Because of this, fund-raising was noted as one major obstacle for the CTM campaign [27]. Regardless, the advocacy side of the campaign was able to raise \$6.5 million, an amount which received a great deal of criticism before the referendum. Major corporations and businesses helped fund the majority of the campaign. Contributions came from companies such as Home Depot, Cox Enterprises, Georgia Power Company, Coca-Cola Company, Clear Channel, Delta, UPS, Turner Broadcasting System, as well as a large number of construction companies [34]. Many argued that the construction companies had a lot to gain if the referendum passed in the Atlanta region.

The advocacy campaign ran the “Untie Atlanta” commercial advertisements, billboards (see Figure 17), and social media discussions. The advocacy campaign was the most visible campaign due to its large financial investments in billboard and commercial advertisements around the region. According to the ethics report, the CTM campaign spent \$4.8 million on paying staff, advertising, print advertising, online advertising, media advertising, ad production, video production, television production, sponsorship, social media management,

website management, polling, surveys, automated phone calls, consulting, events, and campaign buttons, signs, T-shirts, bumper stickers, push cards, and flyers [34]. Independent polling conducted two months before the election noted the far reach of the campaign when 39.6 percent of respondents reported they had seen television advertisements regarding the referendum and 31.9 percent had reportedly received mailings regarding the referendum. Also, a total of 75.5 percent of respondents reported being either “somewhat familiar” or “familiar” with the transportation sales tax voter referendum that will be on all ballots [72].



Figure 17: CTM Campaign Billboard [47]

According to a member of the campaign, the focus changed after polling data showed that the campaign should be targeting the Democrats more heavily. The campaign had good “inroads” with the suburban Republican vote but in order to gain a stronger turnout, they began to focus more heavily on Democrats. With the movement toward conservative and no new taxes, it took away some Republicans who may have voted for the referendum. To make up this deficit, the campaign began to heavily target the Democrats around a month before the referendum [27].

Mayor Reed

From his time in the Georgia legislature, Mayor Kasim Reed had been a strong advocate for the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 and public referendum. Not surprisingly, Mayor Reed became one of the biggest advocates for the referendum during the campaign. Mayor Reed held a number of press conferences and spoke on behalf of the referendum. Many criticize him for not being active enough at the beginning of the campaign. However, he was the loudest advocate during the months leading up to the referendum. Mayor Reed pushed the BeltLine and the regional nature of the project list. According to many, he was no longer the Mayor of Atlanta; Mayor Reed became the Mayor of the Atlanta region. However, this persona made many suburban voters angry. Many did not think the Mayor of Atlanta should tell them what to do, saying, “he is not my Mayor.” The Mayor made television and radio appearances, spoke at events for the campaign, and maintained a high level of visibility. The most interesting, and seemingly powerful connection occurred during the same time: the Democrat Mayor Reed partnered with the Republican Governor Nathan Deal.

Governor Deal

To the surprise and anger of many of his supporters, Governor Nathan Deal came out in favor of the transportation referendum, speaking at a number of fund-raising events across the state. Even more interesting is that Governor Deal did not sign the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 into law. Nonetheless, the governor came out in favor of the referendum given that the referendum had the potential to attract companies and provide a number of positive impacts to the state of Georgia. The bipartisan support of the top leaders in the Atlanta region should have made a large impact on the results of the referendum. However, though many praised the support of the two leaders, many also believe the partnership seemed political and temporary, possibly affecting the power of the partnership.

Legislators, Local Officials, and Others

In addition to the power of the most influential members of the community, some local officials involved in the project selection process and legislators involved in the legislation were supportive of the referendum. However, a great deal of the legislators and local officials were silent supporters. Many were up for re-election and weary of supporting such a controversial issue during their re-election efforts.

In addition, members of the community, transit advocates, seniors, and concerned individuals were supportive of the referendum. Many spread the word through grass roots efforts and aiding the campaign through volunteer work. Though the proponents had a large amount of support financially and otherwise, the opponents countered with a powerful mix of unusual allies.

3.6.2 Opponents

The size and make-up of the opponents surprised many legislators and local officials involved in the process. Groups with seemingly nothing in common formed a unified bond to defeat the referendum through education and grass-roots efforts. The Atlanta Tea Party, the Sierra Club, and the DeKalb NAACP along with legislators and local officials drove the opposition for the transportation referendum.

The Tea Party

The Atlanta Tea Party was against the referendum from the basic understanding that the group is fundamentally against tax increases. The Tea Party also argued that the project list was far too heavy on transit investment and was not the best use of the taxpayers' dollars. The Atlanta Tea Party did not reach the \$500 dollar contribution threshold to file state paperwork. They relied on small donations to pay for grass-root efforts such as yard signs and volunteer work [47]. The leader of the Atlanta Tea Party movement was present as a representative at the majority of the meetings and debates across the Atlanta region. One criticism that many interviewees echoed was that the Tea Party leaders were not elected and therefore it was difficult to know what constituency they actually represented. It was

difficult to quantify how large the Atlanta Tea Party constituency was in the Atlanta region. The Atlanta Tea Party received equal footing in the media as if it were as powerful and substantial as the business community constituency. However, polling numbers suggested a substantial amount of support for the Tea Party philosophy. Of the respondents to an independent poll conducted on June 12, 2012, 52.7 percent of respondents among those who identify as Republican or Independent also identified with “all of it” or “most of it” when asked if they identify with the general philosophy of the Tea Party. When expanded to identifying “with some of it”, that total increased to 77.4 percent of those respondents who identify as republican or independent [52].

The Sierra Club

The Sierra Club was against the referendum mostly on the grounds that the project list was seriously flawed. The Sierra Club disagreed with the roadway projects which were “sprawl inducing” as well as the limited amount of transit projects. Given that the gas tax structure did not allow transit funding, the Sierra Club believed the project list should have ideally been 100 percent transit projects. They argued that transit had no other source of funding and thus should be given priority over roadway projects, which could be funded by other means. The Sierra Club argued that a sales tax was not the ideal method for financing and the process put forth by the legislation put the region in the perpetual cycle of a “dysfunctional, undemocratic decision-making process” [90]. The Sierra Club advocated restructuring and increase of the gas tax among other financial strategies. Even though the Tea Party disagreed with the referendum partly for having too much transit, the Sierra Club became their close partners against the referendum. The partnership shocked and angered many members of the campaign and project selection process. The Sierra Club’s opposition was a close vote internally. The Sierra Club was one board member away from having no public opinion on the matter. Many members of the Sierra Club were vocally upset about the Sierra Club’s public opposition of the referendum, feeling that the initiative was better than doing nothing in the region. A member of the Sierra Club said that the strategy of the Sierra Club’s opposition was based on the high probability of the referendum failing. Once

the referendum failed, the Sierra Club would be able to have a strong political stance on a successful “plan B” [21].

The DeKalb NAACP

The DeKalb NAACP was against the referendum due to equity issues in South Fulton as well as the unequal payment of two pennies by the Fulton and DeKalb residents. The campaign’s initial strategy had been relying heavily on the large level of support out of Fulton and DeKalb Counties. Instead, racial and equity issues caused unexpectedly low levels of support from leaders and constituency in the area. Influential leaders in the Black community came out in strong dissent against the referendum. These leaders went up against the Mayor of Atlanta, usually a powerful representative for the Black community in Atlanta. The public discourse which ensued created misinformation and emotion in the surrounding Black community. Having lost their support, initially identified as the base support for the passage of the referendum, many believed the referendum did not have a chance to pass. Others still believe there were other larger factors that played into the failure of the referendum, saying that the opposition of the DeKalb NAACP itself did not play a substantial role in the failure of the referendum. Still, the dissent provides an interesting comparison to the failed MARTA referendum of 1968, discussed in chapter 2.


The Transportation Leadership Coalition, LLC

Though there were many small groups and concerned individuals involved, only one received the majority of publicity. The Transportation Leadership Coalition, LLC was formed along with a grass-roots campaign against the TSPLOST by May 1, 2012. The group maintained traffictruth.net, the most influential and organized online resource used by the opposition. The group worked to defeat the referendum by educating the public. They pushed the idea that the passage of the referendum would be the largest tax increase in the history of the state of Georgia [92]. This phrase was used on yard signs and campaign signs. Many interviewees believe the phrase resonated well with suburban and exurban Republicans. The group also pushed the distrust in government by pointing out the close to \$8 million dollars of campaign funding used by the proponents, while the Transportation Leadership Coalition

only spent a reported \$14,418 in total [47]. The group questioned deliverability by GDOT and the validity of ARC facts, overall questioning the public trust in government agencies. Through the website, the group provided their own fact sheets and documentation to argue that the referendum was not the best use of taxpayer dollars. Outside of the website, the group pushed their agenda through social media and emailing. The group primarily used yard signs, bumper stickers, flyers, and push cards to “get the word out.” Figure 18 shows one flyer which documents the group’s views and efforts in the opposition campaign. The group also held events such as the “Lights for Liberty Drive” which received criticism from the proponents. During the “Lights for Liberty Drive”, the group gathered to drive the I-285 loop counter clockwise for two loops. The group drove the speed limit in the center lane with their flashers on to protest the referendum [92].


Major Pitfalls with T-SPLOST/TIA
 Learn the Facts at TrafficTruth.net


Largest Tax Increase (\$) In Georgia History
Vote NO to the 1% Regional Sales Tax



TrafficTruth.net

- 1) **When** is the last time you saw a sales tax “sunset”? Once in place, this sales tax will never go away. With every new source of revenue, local governments get addicted and expand.
- 2) **25% of the T-SPLOST** is really a local government **slush fund to be used in whatever manner they please**. This was the state’s “payoff” to get local governments to support this new tax.
- 3) In addition to salivating local governments, there is a list of special-interest groups lined up behind the measure who stand to gain financially if it passes. Road pavers, developers, engineering firms, consultants, etc. all have a hand in promoting this self-serving tax.
- 4) Recent audits of the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) show a **massive** amount of waste and fraud in the road-building system. GDOT is a hotbed of **political favoritism** and mismanagement. The pro-TSPLOST movement is asking voters to give GDOT even **more** public money to **waste**!
- 5) Regional governance would take away from local control and gives more authority to unelected and unaccountable regional councils. It shifts the balance of power toward the cities and urban areas.
- 6) Proponents of T-SPLOST claim it will create jobs and will be good for economic development. But state leaders claim that for every decision they make these days. That’s how so-called “conservative” politicians justify higher taxes and more government spending. True conservatives know that job creation and economic growth works **best** when it is initiated from the private sector.





**VOTE NO on the July 31st
Regional Transportation Referendum**
Learn the facts.

Figure 18: Transportation Leadership Coalition Anti - TSPLOST Campaign Material [92]

Legislators

A group of influential legislators, many who had initially voted for the legislation in 2010, came out in strong opposition for the referendum. They argued that the lack of an “opt-out” criterion raised many questions. They had voted for the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 with caution and the promise that “the projects will be laser focused on traffic congestion” [3]. In their opinion, 52 percent transit on the project list had broken the promise and was not a good use of taxpayer dollars. Moreover, the legislators argued that the project list

should not have addressed economic development and therefore was a poor use of taxpayers' dollars. Also, they argued that the legislation was unconstitutional because it lacked enabling legislation. Members of the project selection process and campaign were angered by the legislators who came out publicly against the referendum, calling it hypocritical. They argued that if legislators overwhelmingly voted for the legislation and provided this process, they should not then be against the results of the process. One member of the community argued that the only reason "we are here" is because the legislators did not do their job in the first place [26]. The legislators were given three years to come up with a solution, and instead the legislators pushed it back to the local officials with an "awkward tool" and during the process "shot bullets" at the referendum [26].

Others

Concerned individuals not necessary identifying with the groups above were also involved as volunteers and attendees at debates and meetings. These individuals used primarily grass-roots and word of mouth to push for the rejection of the referendum.

3.6.3 Political Plays and Strategies

No Plan B

The proponents often mentioned that there was "no Plan B", meaning the alternative to passing the referendum was to do nothing. At many debates, one of the main reasons proponents offered for the public to support the referendum was that there was nothing else. They argued that the legislature would not pass another bill and, if the referendum were held again, it would be at least two years away. This would put the region in a "transportation crisis." In addition, the proponents would argue that the referendum was Atlanta's final chance to invest in transit. This discussion angered many in the opposition. They argued that the law allowed for a new list to be voted on in two years. The opponents also argued that there were many plans that could be initiated if the referendum failed, calling it a "high pressure sales tactic" [3]. The Sierra Club responded to the comments by providing a report that discussed the various alternatives to the transportation referendum.

GA 400 Toll

Governor Deal, in an effort to garner favorable support for the referendum by improving trust in the government, promised to end the tolls on the GA 400 toll road, a campaign promise which had gone unanswered from a previous administration. The unanswered promise had caused years of distrust in government to build around the issue of transportation in the region. His promise to remove the tolls occurred just a week before the vote. Many took the timing to be very political and contemplated. According to the majority of those interviewed, this completely backfired and may have had an overall negative impact on the results of the referendum.

Don't Tell Me How to Vote

Some members of the business community sent emails and letters requesting or recommending that their employees vote in favor of the referendum. Some only sent emails and letters to their employees that informed and educated. Many believe this actually backfired on members of the business community.

3.6.4 The Last Stretch

According to the ARC, more than 24,000 Metro Atlanta residents were connected to local officials during June to discuss the referendum. Twelve Wireside Chats occurred over six different evenings in June. The chats were divided by jurisdiction [6]. The campaign ran advertisements during the Olympics. The grass-roots efforts of the opponents picked up. The political atmosphere was charged and the media was producing multiple articles daily.

3.6.5 Final Polling Numbers

Polling done by Rosetta Stone Communications on May 20, 2012 with a margin of error of 3.5 percent noted voter patterns leading up to the vote. Polling from the same source was done once in June and twice more in July. Similar trends were seen in each poll conducted by Rosetta Stone Communications. When asked how likely the respondents were to vote in the primary, 48.9 percent and 41.0 percent of respondents said they would vote in the Republican and Democrat primary, respectively, with 10.1 percent undecided. The same

results were broken down into DeKalb and Fulton Counties or the suburbs as well as Black, White, or other (see Table 6). The results suggest that, of the respondents, there was a clear partisan divide between the races in the Atlanta 10-County region. In addition, the results suggest that, of the respondents, there was a clear partisan divide between the two geographic areas defined as those identifying as residents of DeKalb and Fulton Counties and those identifying as residents of the suburbs. When asked if they would support or oppose the referendum if the referendum were held today, the results showed marked differences between age, region, race and party affiliation (see Table 6). The results suggest that, of the respondents, the support for the referendum was higher for residents of DeKalb and Fulton Counties as well as for respondents identifying as Black. The same was true for those respondents identifying as Democrat. Overall, the results indicated that the referendum was more likely to fail in two months' time. However, the results made many hold out hope for swaying the 13.5 percent plus or minus 3.5 percent of voters who were undecided on the referendum. Mayor Reed publicly said, "We are not here to read polls, we are here to change polls" meaning it was the opponent's job to get the public to understand this was a problem and the transportation referendum was the right solution [25].

Table 6: Polling Results from Rosetta Stone Communications for May 20, 2012 [72]

Question	Total	Region		Race			Party		
		DeKalb/Fulton	Suburbs	Black	White	Others	Republican	Democrat	Undecided
Likely to vote Republican?	48.9%	27.4%	65.4%	7.6%	77.4%	30.4%	100%	0%	0%
Likely to vote Democrat?	41.0%	60.4%	26.1%	81.3%	15.0%	41.3%	0%	100%	0%
Likely to vote undecided?	10.1%	12.2%	8.5%	11.1%	7.6%	28.3%	0%	0%	100%
Support referendum?	41.5%	52.0%	33.4%	55.1%	33.4%	33.3%	27.8%	58.6%	38.5%
Oppose the referendum?	45.0%	33.3%	53.9%	27.2%	56.5%	46.7%	62.7%	26.7%	33.9%
Undecided?	13.5%	14.7%	12.7%	17.7%	10.1%	20.0%	9.5%	14.7%	27.6%

Another independent study was conducted a month before the vote. The research asked

the respondents “if the vote were held today, how would you vote on the following referendum.” The respondent was given the exact wording to be presented on the ballot. The respondent was then asked, “Would you vote for this, against this, or are you undecided?” The results in Table 7 show the responses to this question only from the respondents who were likely to vote in the July 31st Georgia election divided into age, race, and party affiliation [52]. The results suggest that, of the respondents, there was an even more pronounced discrepancy between those supporting and those opposing the referendum. Also, the number of voters who responded under “don’t know” is much higher than the comparable “undecided” in the previous poll. The results suggest that, of the respondents, those 18 - 29 were overwhelmingly supportive of the referendum. In the age range of 30 - 44, the majority was against the referendum or did not know. The same trend occurred for both higher age ranges. In the terms of race, the results suggest that, of the respondents, those identifying as Black were more in favor than any other race or ethnicity. The results also suggest that, of those respondents, there is still a clear partisan divide between those against the referendum and those for it. Similarly, the proponents looked favorably on the results noting the 21 percent who answered “don’t know”, while also citing their own polling which was more favorable. Many proponents mentioned their polling numbers being 50 percent for the referendum and 50 percent against the referendum in interviews leading up to the vote, some of which was never released to the public.

Table 7: Polling Results from Insider Advantage for June 12, 2012 [52]

Question	Total	Age				Race			Party		
		18 - 29	30 - 44	45 - 64	65 +	Black	White	Others	Republican	Democrat	Independent
Vote for it	31.7%	98.1%	23.4%	28.2%	29.7%	38.1%	29.9%	14.6%	28.7%	48.0%	20.1%
Vote against it	47.3%	1.9%	47.9%	47.0%	55.9%	29.3%	53.8%	69.0%	60.6%	26.7%	52.2%
Don't know	21.0%	0.0%	28.7%	24.8%	14.4%	32.6%	16.3%	16.4%	10.7%	25.3%	27.8%

The polling for the Mayor of Atlanta was conducted by Hill Research Consultants. A survey was conducted on likely primary election voters. Table 8 shows the results of the independent survey. The results indicate that the inner counties of DeKalb and Fulton

when compared to rest of the 10-County region were much more likely to approve the transportation referendum. The results were similar to the results conducted by Rosetta Stone Communications. The results were some of the most favorable survey results released to the public.

Table 8: Polling Results from Hill Research Consultants for July 11, 2012 [51]

Question	Specific	County Geography							Total
		ATL Counties	DeKalb	Fulton	Northwest	Cobb	Southeast	Gwinnett	
Yes to approve	Strongly	30	26	33	21	25	24	20	26
	Not strongly	14	18	10	12	11	11	11	12
	Total	44	44	43	33	36	36	31	38
No to reject	Not strongly	11	9	14	14	8	12	17	12
	Strongly	21	26	16	39	40	31	31	29
	Total	32	35	30	53	49	44	48	41
Unsure		22	19	24	12	13	17	18	18
Refused		3	2	3	2	2	3	3	3
Yes - no		12	10	13	-20	-12	-8	-18	-3
Number of cases		339	153	185	219	146	244	112	803

The proponents still held out hope during interviews leading up to the vote, noting the amount of “unsure” respondents in each of the reported polls. Several other independent polls and surveys were conducted leading up to the referendum, showing similar trends highlighted in this section. The most notable takeaway from the polling completed is that each source was slightly different and received slightly different results; however, the majority of polling foreshadowed the ultimate results of the referendum. Interestingly, the majority of polling resulted in generally more favorable results than the actual referendum results.

3.7 Voter Referendum

The referendum occurred on July 31, 2012. Each side of the campaign, along with other smaller groups, held campaign watch parties across the region. All were expecting a very

close race. Throughout the timeline of interviews, when asked the percentage yes votes, the majority of those interviewed expected an extremely close race. Even though polling results approaching the vote began to show a smaller chance of approval, the majority of those interviewed in the last month were still “hopeful.”

When the voters cast their ballot, they were not shown a project list or given any background. After party-specific questions, the transportation referendum ballot question was asked along with other referenda, regardless of party affiliation. Figure 19 shows the ballot questions each voter was given before they cast their ballot.

() YES Shall _____ County's transportation system and the transportation network in this region and the state be improved by providing for a 1 percent special district transportation sales and use tax for the purpose of transportation projects and programs for a period of ten years?

() NO

Figure 19: Wording for Transportation Referendum on July 31, 2012 Ballot [78]

Advance voting began July 9, 2012 and reported numbers were much higher than usual. According to the Secretary of State website, 18.8 percent of the votes in the referendum were early voting, meaning categorized as being either advanced in person or an absentee ballot. In terms of results, 16.5 percent of yes votes were early voting and 20.2 percent of no votes were early voting [7].

3.7.1 Results

The results were decided within a few hours of the polls closing. The Atlanta region had failed to pass the referendum 38 to 62 percent. Table 9 shows the results of the transportation referendum by county. Though the results were based on the majority vote of the entire 10-County region, inferences can be made about the results of each county separately. Each specific county failed to approve the transportation referendum. DeKalb, Fulton, and Clayton Counties had the highest approval, each being under 4 percent away from passage. Cherokee and Fayette Counties had the lowest approval with fewer than 24 percent approval. Also, Henry, Rockdale, Gwinnett, Douglas, and Cobb were grouped together around

30 percent approval. Overall, the transportation referendum resulted in a resounding failure in the Atlanta region. However, notably, the City of Atlanta supported the transportation referendum 58 to 42 percent.

Table 9: County Results for Transportation Referendum on July 31, 2012 Ballot [7]

County	Percentage Yes Votes	Percentage No Votes
Cherokee	20.52%	79.48%
Clayton	46.47%	53.53%
Cobb	31.20%	68.80%
DeKalb	48.70%	51.30%
Douglas	32.05%	67.95%
Fayette	23.52%	76.48%
Fulton	49.17%	50.83%
Gwinnett	29.10%	70.90%
Henry	28.69%	71.31%
Rockdale	30.33%	69.67%
Total	37.70%	62.30%

Figure 20 shows a precinct level geographic representation of the results of the referendum. A clear radial trend can be seen in the results. The results suggest a divide in interests between the urban areas and the suburban/exurban areas of the region. As the distance increases radially from the center of the city, the percentage yes vote substantially decreases. Also, the results suggest a higher percentage voting yes in the southern portion of the region, below Interstate 20. Given that Black populations south of Interstate 20 are significantly larger, the results suggest a higher percentage of yes votes from the Black community. In addition, a lower percentage of yes votes trended in the highly populated and affluent Northern suburbs. Further research must be conducted on demographics to better understand the demographic and socioeconomic results of the transportation referendum.

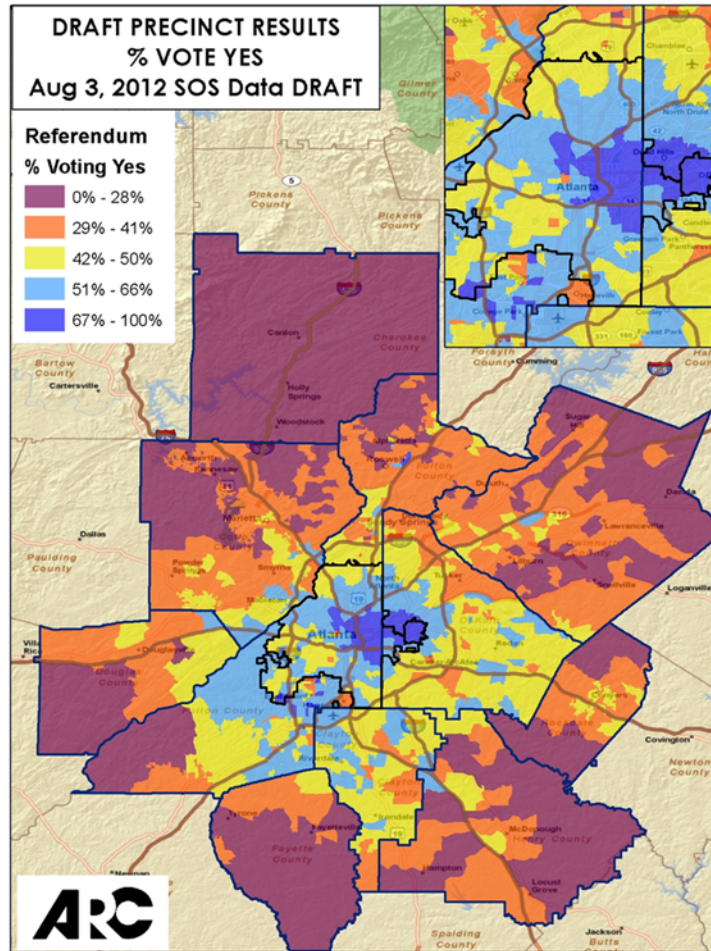


Figure 20: Geographic Precinct Voter Results of Atlanta Region [6]

Another surprising finding from the results originated from the unusually high level of turnout for the election. Many interviewees were shocked by the turnout, saying that no other issue on the ballot could draw that amount of votes. Table 10 shows the number of ballots cast, number of registered voters, and voter turnout percentage by county.

Table 10: 2012 General Primary Voter Turnout Percentage in the 10-County Atlanta Region [7]

County	Ballots Cast	Registered Voters	Voter Turnout
Cherokee	44,419	124,372	35.71%
Clayton	36,075	150,788	23.92%
Cobb	124,304	398,052	31.23%
DeKalb	126,221	405,103	31.16%
Douglas	19,923	70,478	28.27%
Fayette	28,400	72,585	39.13%
Fulton	145,387	542,683	26.79%
Gwinnett	100,058	391,232	25.58%
Henry	32,786	117,845	27.82%
Rockdale	17,962	48,523	37.02%
Total	675,535	2,321,661	29.10%

Table 11 shows the number of ballots cast in the previous two primary elections, the 2008 and 2010 primary elections when compared to the number of ballots cast in the 2012 primary election. The number of ballots cast increased by close to 1.5 times the number of ballots cast in the 2010 and over 2 times the number of ballots cast in the 2008 primary election. The marked difference along with interview statements suggest that the increase of thousands of ballots cast in the Atlanta region was due to the controversial transportation referendum issue at the ballot. A member of the business community remembers seeing the numbers coming in as strong as they did during the night of the election and realizing at that moment that the polling had not been reliable, primarily because they had not been polling the right people [26].

Table 11: Comparison of Voter Turnout in 2008, 2010, and 2012 Primary Election in the 10-County Atlanta Region [7]

Year of General Primary	Ballots Cast	Registered Voters	Voter Turnout
2008	320,936	2,308,787	13.9%
2010	456,115	2,290,984	19.91%
2012	675,535	2,321,661	29.10%

Further study on the demographics of the registered voters in comparison to the voter results of the 2012 primary election is currently in the discussion phase with ARC and a third-party consultant. When completed, this research could possibly give further insight into the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the results for the transportation referendum. The next section discusses the issues following the transportation referendum.

3.8 Political Aftermath

After the referendum, many in the transportation community were silent. The first signs of placing blame were all directed at the campaign. Governor Nathan Deal made a public statement that did not resonate well with transit advocates and inner city voters. Some local officials involved in the project selection process and legislators involved in the legislation lost their seats. The Plan B that many believed might occur, the production of a new project list and referendum has not occurred. According to interviewees, the possibilities are slim to none. As of early 2013, there has been little in the way of discussions on new efforts at transportation funding in the Atlanta region.

3.8.1 Governor Nathan Deal

After the election, Governor Nathan Deal made public comments regarding the failed referendum. Governor Nathan Deal informed the public that he had no intent to revisit the regional transportation tax after the resounding rejection, saying “the public had expressed their opinion on that” [32]. He went on to silence the requests for restructuring the gas tax or re-purposing the hotel tax, requests made consistently by the Sierra Club during the campaign. Governor Deal presented a strategy for the state of Georgia where he would make

certain projects a priority. One such project would be the new interchange at Georgia 400 and Interstate 285. The Governor mentioned needing “sharp cuts” to ensure the funding of these high priority projects. Governor Deal also noted that he was not going to give funding for MARTA a high priority, arguing that MARTA needed serious restructuring and improved functionality before the topic would even be considered [32]. Many took these MARTA criticisms as a blatant attack on transit in the region. To many, the governor was blaming the failure of the referendum on MARTA. Many believe the discussion, as well as the results of the referendum, did not help the already deteriorating case for transit investment in the Atlanta region. Some went as far as to say it slammed the door for transit investment in the Atlanta region in the near future.

3.8.2 Campaign Criticisms

Of those interviewed, the common blame for the resounding failure of the referendum was placed on the campaign. Many blamed the communications side of the campaign for not reaching the right voters. Others blamed the campaign for “not being with the times,” saying that early voting had changed the strategy for a successful campaign. Because of this, many believe the campaign did not start their advocacy portion in time to sway many voters; by the time they had reached the voters, the voters had already decided and were about to cast their ballots. Many blamed the leadership of the campaign for being inexperienced in campaign management. Others criticized the messaging and how it was implemented in advertisements. Many blamed the campaign for focusing far too much on congestion mitigation when the numbers did not warrant the campaign slogans. Some compared the campaign strategy to the grass-roots strategy of the opposition, saying the campaign should have placed their \$8 million dollar funds toward more grass-roots options instead of big glossy advertisements. Some interviewees reversed the criticism saying the campaign was too successful in reaching the public, and attracted a significant number of no voters to the polls along with the yes voters they were targeting. Regardless, the campaign received a number of criticisms on factors which may or may not have changed the outcome of the referendum. Many of those interviewed believe that other factors were much more significant

in the failure of the referendum.

3.8.3 Local Officials Lose Seats

On the night of the referendum, many incumbents either lost their race outright or entered into runoff races. Though many factors likely contributed to the loss of many incumbents in their re-election campaigns, many believed the transportation referendum and the roles many of the officials and legislators played in the process might have been a main factor. Since the election, a few other legislators and local officials have also been unseated. Many attribute this to the overarching national issues of distrust in government, the economy, and the looming presidential election. Many believe the voters came out in unexpectedly large numbers to voice their opinion on these issues by addressing the local issues, especially a local attempt to increase taxes as well as any elected official allowing it to occur.

3.8.4 Plan B

Many in the public felt there would be a better alternative to the transportation referendum. The legislation allowed another project list and referendum 24 months after the failure of the referendum. The public was hoping for an improved plan and project list in a few years' time. However, this "plan B" will never make it to fruition. Instead, the majority of those interviewed after the election believe it will politically be close to a decade before any transportation finance initiative would be seriously discussed in the legislature. Many also believe this estimate to be a "best case scenario" alternative. Because of the lack of transportation funding, the Atlanta region will continue forward with increased traffic congestion and reduced quality of life, highlighted in the Atlanta region's Plan 2040. No additional transit investments or funding initiatives have moved forward in the 2013 legislative session.

Some are hopeful saying that other regions in the nation who have attempted similar initiatives have failed their first time around. This group believes the Atlanta region has now elevated the issue of transportation in the region and calls the failure a pre-requisite to a passing initiative. These members of the community are hopeful for future transportation initiatives, regardless of the design, in the next decade. Also, many in the Atlanta

region forget that three regions passed their transportation referenda in the state of Georgia, meaning there probably will not be any restructuring of the current legislation. Many believe nothing will happen in transportation investment until the races are held for the Governor of Georgia and City of Atlanta, so another three or four years. Until re-election season is over, it is not politically likely that anything in transportation funding will be attempted. More reasonable, the timeline for attempting transportation investment ranges from a favorable estimate of four years to as much as over a decade. Until then, the region will look on as other regions across the nation as well as the three regions that successfully passed their referenda move forward and implement their transportation funding initiatives. Until then, the Atlanta region is left with alternatives such as tolls, increased property taxes, or continuing in its “transportation crisis.” The next chapter highlights issues discussed and lessons learned for the Atlanta region as well as other regions comparable to the Atlanta region.

3.9 Summary

The Atlanta region unanimously passed a final investment list through the hard work of the executive committee, ARC staff, local government staff, and the RTR. The business community largely supported the official campaign through donations and endorsements. A strong partnership between the Democrat Mayor Reed of Atlanta and the Republican Governor Deal became the face of the proponents a month prior to the referendum. The opposition countered the well-financed campaign with an unexpected partnership between the Sierra Club, the Tea Party, and the DeKalb NAACP. The polling results leading up to the vote on July 31, 2012 were found to be unreliable when the actual results were far from the close race expected from projections. The final results of the referendum were 38 to 62 percent. The geographic results showed a radial trend of increased no votes as the distance from the center of the city increased. Not one county of the 10-County region voted in favor of the referendum. Notably, the city of Atlanta passed the referendum 58 to 42 percent. The resounding failure of the referendum in the Atlanta region provides a number of lessons for future initiatives in the state of Georgia, as well as in other regions across the nation.

The next chapter details the factors identified by interviewees as contributing factors to the failure of the referendum in the Atlanta region.

Chapter IV

LESSONS LEARNED

Political strategies and negotiated results shaped the outcome of the referendum. Those interviewed felt the failure of the referendum resulted from a “perfect storm” of factors. The majority of those interviewed believed that though many factors played a role, the overarching national issues, discussed in the final section of this chapter, were the main contributing factors to the failure of the referendum. In the following sections, each factor is examined and lessons learned are given for future referenda in the Atlanta region as well as in other regions in the nation.

4.1 The Transportation Investment Act of 2010

The Transportation Investment Act of 2010 presented a series of political compromises [25]. The governor had a number of specifics that he wanted addressed in the legislation and the majority of his “musts” were included in the final bill. A number of legislators wanted specific items as well. Many blamed these additions for the ultimate failure of the referendum in the Atlanta region. Some even went as far as to say the bill was “designed to fail.”

4.1.1 10-Year Period

Local officials criticized the 10-year period required by the legislation. Given that Georgia’s county-specific TSPLOSTs could only be imposed for a six-year period, the 10-year requirement did not leave room for seemingly regional projects that might require an extended funding period. For instance, many of those interviewed disagreed with the 10-year requirements, arguing that transit projects normally require a much larger window for project completion. Transit projects under a 10-year requirement for completion could possibly run into issues that might push back the completion date; under the legislation, this would leave the project incomplete without additional funding. This type of complication could possibly meet dissatisfaction with the public and increase the already heightened public distrust in

government.

The legislation outlined a provision for a sales tax renewal by a public referendum after the 10-year period expired, a method which has been highly successful with Georgia's county-specific TSPLOSTs. An incomplete transit project could potentially reduce public willingness to renew the regional sales tax after the 10-year period had passed. Even so, many members of the legislature had designed bills with six or eight year periods in the two years prior, arguing that a 10-year period was too lengthy. Many believe the reduced time periods in legislation were meant to disincentive transit investment on the project list.

Lessons Learned

Designing the project selection process such that criteria were to be developed externally from the legislation formed a conflict between the legislature and the local officials in the fundamental understanding of the intended purpose of the legislation. By setting up a process which allowed the local officials to draft criteria, the legislation created an unknown factor. Given the relatively strict process codified in the legislation, the oversight allowed for too much flexibility when compared to the rest of the legislation. Local officials in the Atlanta region were allowed to produce a list with more transit than many in the legislature felt was acceptable. The disjointed nature of the design left a gap which made transit funding possible through the initiative but difficult given time constraints. The legislature could have eliminated the issue by either increasing the time period, making transit investment more feasible, or creating criteria restricting transit. Even stricter, the legislature could have placed a percentage cap on transit investment in the Atlanta region.

Some in the legislature disagreed with the level of transit and publicly complained that the 10-year time period would not be sufficient for the transit projects on the list. Their criticisms were highly publicized and might have been a factor in the failure of the referendum. To counteract this issue, the legislature could have been stricter on the criteria or the time period so that the intended purpose of the legislation would be carried through the process. If transit is less favorable in a region, creating a time frame of six years would reduce the level of transit on the list automatically. If transit is more favorable in a region,

the time frame should be increased to a more feasible period for transit investment. In this case, additional time should be built in for transit investment to ensure public trust and the viability of future referenda.

4.1.2 Date of the Election

The public referendum was required by legislation to take place on the Republican Primary of July 31, 2012. Some legislators suggested that this date was chosen as a campaign strategy: by placing the vote on a date that would lessen voter turnout, you could minimize the opportunity for failure and slide in “under the radar.” Another argument is that a vote on this date would be less likely to pass with the high turnout of conservative voters, “minimizing the opportunity for success” [22]. To many, this date typically represented an election date where voters who were more likely to vote against it were going to the polls to vote on other matters [23]. Many argued that the date should have been on the presidential election ballot, when there is typically a more representative sample of the general public going to the polls and when voters more likely to support a sales tax would be present.

Though some legislators were against it, the date of the election was one of the “musts” the governor wanted in the legislation and was “not up for debate.” In addition, many legislators were hoping the economy would improve. Instead, the economic issues facing the Atlanta region had created an environment and culture that were more anti-government and anti-tax than when the bill was passed into law in 2010. Without the flexibility to change the date of the vote, the referendum was required to be held on a date where many believe the sentiments were at its highest. Flexibility in the legislation might have allowed officials to analyze the political atmosphere, social atmosphere, and current polling numbers and make the informed decision to postpone the election. For instance, in Denver, even though a proposed 0.4 percent sales tax increase was slated for the November 2012 ballot, the Regional Transportation District Board decided not to place the measure on the ballot. Instead, the Board pushed back the dates for the proposed vote [24].

When retrospectively asked what they would go back and change in the legislation, one member of the House said they would have liked to have made the date open-ended [1].

The representative explained that it was difficult to foresee the political atmosphere two years later. The General Assembly could not have predicted the struggling economy, the controversial decisions surrounding the opening of the High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes on Interstate 85, and the broken campaign promise to end tolling on Georgia 400 [1]. According to the representative, each of these played a role in the failure of the referendum. A more open-ended date for the referendum could have provided an opportunity to bypass some of these issues, which were encountered prior to the referendum.

One member of the full regional transportation roundtable criticized the date of the referendum for being set too close to the re-election of many who served on the full roundtable. He argued that the referendum was held when the members of the roundtable, “who you needed to go out there and help, were all up for re-election, for a tax in a conservative state” [20]. A number of incumbents lost their seats, many believe because of their support of the referendum.

Lessons Learned

The date of the election was initially designed for a number of reasons. Retrospectively, the date should have been moved to the presidential election to increase the turnout of voters generally more willing to vote for tax increases. Also, the date of the election should be analyzed and the most beneficial date should be selected not only in terms of characteristics of voter turnout but also in terms of political feasibility of leadership support for the initiative. It is important to push for strong public support from members of the RTR as well as local and state leadership. The timing of the election conflicted heavily with the re-election campaigns of a number of the local officials whose support is normally crucial for a sales tax referendum. Regardless, other factors played a more substantial role in the failure of the referendum; many argue that the referendum would have failed regardless of the date.

If the Atlanta region, and possibly other regions, had been given the ability to move the date based upon analysis of the political and social atmosphere along with the polling numbers, some have argued that the vote should have been postponed to a more favorable time. Flexibility must be allowed in the legislation to provide for external political factors

that may occur during the project selection and campaign process. The legislation was passed two years prior to the referendum date. Many local transportation issues and national politics arose and angered the public. The Tea Party became more prominent. With a more flexible bill, the date could have been changed based on the political atmosphere. Allowing for an open-ended date could possibly bypass many of the issues faced by the campaign in the Atlanta region.

4.1.3 Rigid Structure

Some of those interviewed thought the bill was overly complicated, onerous, and cumbersome. For the general public, the bill was difficult to understand, being many pages long and riddled with acronyms and technical jargon. For local officials, it was far too specific and strict. Each date was codified in the legislation and could not be altered. One member heavily involved in the project selection process criticized the legislation saying, the legislature “just made these arbitrary dates, these arbitrary processes, this arbitrary legislation, because they were being twisted, because they hadn’t done anything for six years and now they were on the wire” [20]. Others however, suggested that this rigid structure worked well by positively affecting the local officials in terms of process and execution. With set deadlines, local officials worked diligently to complete tasks on-time.

One of the biggest flaws mentioned in the structure of the legislation centered on the close to nine-month period after the approval of the project list. The time period between the approval of the project list and the vote allowed for months of criticism and controversy without the ability to amend or alter the project list. Complaints surrounding controversial projects went unanswered. Overall public trust decreased when many in the public realized that the project list was “set in stone.” Before the campaign, only active members of the community were aware of the project selection process. Others in the general public were unaware of the process and were thus unable to give their input before the project list was approved.

Lessons Learned

Overall, the bill was difficult to understand for the general public and local officials. Creating a piece of legislation which is easy to understand and transparent may increase public trust in government and the basic understanding of the project selection process and ultimate goal of the legislation. Also, the rigid structure codified into the bill must be relaxed to allow for more flexibility in the process. Creating a piece of legislation at the last moment in the session, though it is part of the political process in the legislature, produced a bill with flaws and groupings of political additions which did not necessarily work well together. In future legislation, the legislature must work against political maneuvers and attempt to produce a more cohesive plan and process. The basic process for project selection was a fundamentally successful process, though flexibility should have been placed into the bill so that situational alterations could be made. Also, the rigid two year time period should be reduced so that the public is given less time to criticize a project list which cannot be altered. Ideally, the project selection process must be highly publicized so that members of the community not normally involved can give public input. After the project list is approved, the vote should occur as soon as politically possible.

4.1.4 Pass it to the Locals

Many stakeholders criticized the Georgia General Assembly for its inability to solve the transportation funding issue. The legislators could have developed a list of projects, or even gone as far as approving a tax without a public referendum. Instead, the majority of decisions, and in turn risks, were pushed to the local officials. Members of the General Assembly responded to the criticism by explaining that the local elected officials, who should know what their communities need, should be tasked with creating a transportation project list. Another member of the legislature remembered the Association of County Commissioners and the Georgia Municipal Association wanting to be a part of the process and be the people making the decisions. The legislator retrospectively believes it was a mistake to allow the locals to pick projects because the criteria were far from what some legislators were expecting from the RTR [3]. According to the legislator, it was “so profoundly against the

expectations that the members of the majority had of what the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 was going to be about” [3].

Some members of the General Assembly did not expect the local elected officials to work as well together as they ultimately did. Many were shocked that all 12 of the regional transportation roundtables were able to devise and vote for a project list. In fact, some stakeholders believed that many legislators voted for the bill hoping that the local elected officials would not be able to work together and inaction would then be blamed on the local representatives. Many members of the General Assembly did not want their name connected to legislation that created a 10-year tax. With local elected officials failing to agree or stumbling through a project list, the chances of a favorable referendum would have been reduced.

Criteria for project selection were not established but only recommended in the legislation. The responsibility to establish criteria was passed to the GDOT director of planning, a position directly connected to the governor by appointment. The criteria were then to be voted on by a majority of members of the regional transportation roundtable of each district. A number of legislators, a majority who had voted in favor of the legislation, and many, who were up for re-election, came out in strong opposition to the referendum in their areas. One of their main complaints centered on the criteria for project selection. In response, several stakeholders criticized the complaints of members of the General Assembly who came out in opposition of the referendum, because they argued that if these members were so against the established criteria, they should have created strict criteria in the bill. In response, the legislators argued that they left the criteria up to each district because of the diverse nature of the state.

Lessons Learned

As mentioned earlier, the gap in the understanding of the fundamental purpose of the legislation between members of the legislature and the RTR played a factor in the failure of the referendum. The legislature could have counteracted their issue with the project list by providing for strict criteria or creating their own project list in the legislation. The unique

political motives behind the Republican support and passage of the legislation played a factor in the failure. Under normal circumstances, legislators who overwhelmingly pass a piece of legislation do not publicly oppose the legislation later. When passing a substantial piece of legislation, it is important to ensure long-term support from the legislature. The criticisms and vocal opposition by legislators who initially passed the legislation negatively affected public opinion. Though it has received criticism, many believe “passing it to the locals” is fundamentally a “good idea” when tasked with creating a project list. Ideally, the project list should be created by planners and engineers along with local officials who represent and understand the needs of their constituency. However, when passing it to the local officials, the legislature must maintain support. If needed, the legislature should implement criteria and restrictions which ensure their support in the long-term.

4.1.5 Regional versus Statewide

Some believed that the “cards were stacked against the referendum” given that the legislation was created by a rural and conservative-oriented legislative body [23]. As discussed in chapter 2, the transportation crisis was largely perceived as an Atlanta problem [25]. However, the rural legislature has historically pushed against allowing metropolitan areas, especially the Atlanta region, to have decision-making abilities [23]. This was one of the main underlying issues surrounding the three-year plus debate on whether to go regional or statewide with the legislation. As discussed earlier, one of the prior legislative efforts addressed Atlanta’s transportation crisis as a separate funding source while addressing the rest of the state with another. Another legislative effort addressed the entire state with one funding source. The argument surrounded how to specifically address the funding issue of Atlanta without giving any additional power to the Atlanta region. The Transportation Investment Act of 2010 created twelve regions, but singled out Atlanta in multiple ways:

- 15 percent instead of the 25 percent in local discretionary funds;
- Mayor of Atlanta allowed on the executive committee in the Atlanta region;
- MARTA fund restrictions on operations and maintenance where operation is entirely

in the Atlanta region;

- Specification of GRTA for contracts on mass transit and bus projects where majority of transit would be in Atlanta region;
- 10-year period for project completion, discriminating against transit capital projects which would most likely be located in the Atlanta region.

The legislation was designed in part to “solve” Atlanta’s transportation crisis while providing the rest of the state with the ability to acquire additional transportation funding. Many argue that the remaining 11 regions were “slapped together” and did not have a defined transportation vision. Some counties next to each other might have had a better relationship together than with their respective regions. One legislator argues that Paulding County should have been included in the Atlanta region instead of Fayette County given that more commuters come from the former rather than the latter [3].

Without a clear transportation vision, many believe these regions were doomed to fail. Only three regions passed the referendum, and all by slim majorities, as shown in Table 12. Many believe these three regions passed the referendum because they could agree on a transportation vision for local road funding. Many of the major projects in these rural regions, known as some of the most rural areas of the state of Georgia, addressed paving dirt roads and improving local roads, issues many voters could agree on.

Table 12: Three Regions Passing July 31, 2012 Referenda [7]

Region	Yes	No	Outcome
Central Savannah River Area District	54%	46%	Passed
River Valley District	54%	46%	Passed
Heart of Georgia Altamaha District	52%	48%	Passed

Lessons Learned

The legislature must attempt to limit the affect politics has on the transportation finance initiative. Many mentioned that a statewide funding initiative was far too difficult to attempt given that the state could never agree on a cohesive transportation vision through one project

list, especially since the majority of regions in the regional initiative failed to agree upon a cohesive transportation vision and project list. If this regional initiative did not work, the statewide would be far less feasible. The possibility of passage of a single project list would be reduced as the size of the regions increased. Following the same logic, smaller regions could possibly share a more cohesive transportation vision and agree upon one single project list. Smaller regions are closer together and thus have a higher possibility of holding similar transportation needs.

Through future initiatives, the Atlanta region should be reduced to a five-county region. The region would include the initial areas listed in the MARTA referenda: the City of Atlanta, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, and Gwinnett Counties. All other counties in the state would be allowed to “opt-in” by partnering with other counties and holding a referendum for their own “regional” transportation funding. Incentives could also be allowed through legislation by allowing for higher sales tax percentages or larger time periods in areas where more than two counties partnered together. Allowing for this type of flexibility would move the state toward producing a regional transportation network through targeting similarities between existing local transportation visions across the state. The alternative would accomplish the goals of addressing regionalism, the transportation crisis in the Atlanta area, and the funding needs of the rest of the state.

4.1.6 No Opt-Out

The discussion of allowing a county to “opt-out” of the referendum in each district was heavily debated throughout the three years of legislative discussion. As discussed in chapter 2, the ability for counties to “opt-out” of the MARTA referendum of 1971 created a disjointed and inefficient public transit system. A transit system originally designed as a regional transportation network never truly realized its regional nature. Many in the legislature did not want to allow another regional attempt to be thwarted by an “opt-out” mechanism. This side met resistance from members of the legislature who were against taxing counties that did not vote favorably with their respective regions. Some in the legislature pushed for the inclusion of an “opt-out” criterion while others pushed for a hybrid of the two,

allowing an “opt-out” in the first stage in the form of allowing local officials to provide a resolution for a referendum. Even so, Governor Perdue did not want an “opt-out” criterion in the legislation [18]. The governor’s request was honored and counties were not given the opportunity to “opt-out” of the sales tax if the referendum passed in their district but not in their particular county. Following this mechanism, every county, even counties that did not vote majority in favor of the referendum, was required to pay the sales tax when 50 plus one in the district voted in favor of the referendum. This angered many members of the legislature, even members who voted in favor of the bill. They believed that there were “profound concerns with tying counties together with an unknown project list,” calling it reckless and a near fatal flaw [3]. One member of the House went on to say that it poses profound issues when “counties that pride themselves as being the best managed counties fiscally and otherwise in America” are bound with “organizations like MARTA that over the years have had major issues with both scandals and management issues” [3]. Several stated that the majority of the members against the referendum for these reasons still ultimately voted for the legislation to ensure that the transportation issue would be removed from the governor’s election campaign, and in turn help the re-election efforts of the Republican incumbent, Governor Sonny Perdue. Many of the same legislators who voted with “great reservation” in favor of the legislation later publicly turned on the referendum during the campaign phase [3].

Lessons Learned

Providing for some type of “opt-out” is fundamental to ensure public trust. Many in the public were angered that their respective county might be forced into paying a sales tax when their county did not vote majority in favor of the referendum. The exemption of an “opt-out” criterion was one of the “musts” from Governor Perdue and many in the legislature fundamentally disagreed with the addition. The majority of legislators interviewed were shocked by the exclusion of an “opt-out” criterion. The issue was bipartisan in many ways. For example, the House adopted an amendment in 2009 for which would have provided for a county “opt-out” for any county in any region. Out of 180 in attendance, 172 members,

across party lines, voted in favor of the bill. In fact, there were no objections to the adoption of the amendment. Every single member recognized a county “opt-out” is something they wanted to give their local officials [3]. The only discussion centered on the level of “opt-out” to include in the legislation.

In the state of Georgia, an “opt-out” criterion must be included. However, to ensure that the mistakes of the past are not repeated, the “opt-out” must occur at the beginning of the process. Essentially the “opt-out” would be an “opt-in.” The process would be more favorable in the terms of public trust. Flexibility must also be allowed such that if an important county does not “opt-in”, the process does not move forward. An ideal process would be flexible and transparent with smaller regions of two or more counties who are given the ability to “opt-in” to a partnership and referendum together. After a certain date, the county could not “opt-out.” In other regions across the nation, the inclusion of the “opt-out” criteria should be based on the specific characteristics and beliefs of the public and legislature. If excluding an “opt-out” criterion is politically feasible in the region, it is highly recommended because it essentially ensures a regional process and outcome.

4.1.7 The Carrot and the Stick

One of the most controversial discussions surrounding the legislation was the change in matching requirements for GDOT local maintenance and improvement grants. For regions that failed to pass the referendum, the legislation required a 30 percent match for GDOT local maintenance and improvement grants lasting until the tax is approved. The legislation basically increased the matching requirements to a base level of 50 percent, a level which was similar to matching requirements before the legislation. If the region approved a project list, the matching requirements were then reduced to 30 percent. If the region then voted in favor of the referendum, the matching requirements were further reduced to 10 percent. Some members of the legislature suggested that the matching requirements were created as incentives to the members of the full regional transportation roundtable into promoting the project list and referendum.

The matching requirements were meant initially to be incentives, but were viewed as

disincentives for regions that did not pass the referendum. Many local officials from the nine regions that failed to pass the referendum were unhappy to hear that funding transportation in their local areas might become more difficult given an increase in transportation match funding on the local level. However, these matches became less detrimental given that a new provision in the matching requirements allowed the usage of right-of-way [1]. Many believe they were overblown politically and in the media given that the penalties were not as severe as they originally were portrayed. Still, some legislators worked to change the legislation so that the regions that did not pass the referendum would not incur the matching penalty. However, following the views of the majority of legislators interviewed, their attempt fell on deaf ears and was not moved forward in the 2013 legislative session.

Lessons Learned

Though the matching requirements were initially designed as incentives, the line between incentive and disincentive became blurred through the two-year process. During the campaign, the opposition attacked the political nature of the bill by criticizing the matching requirements. The matching requirements furthered the public distrust in government. If incentives are codified in the legislation, the line between incentive and disincentive must be distant. The incentive must remain an incentive throughout the process. A disincentive is usually skewed as a negative for a public referendum, and thus must be avoided in the legislation.

4.1.8 Fractions of a Penny

In addition to being very complicated, the state currently does not allow sales taxes below 1 percent. In other regions across the nation, sales taxes have been successful at fractions of a penny. For example, Denver passed a regional sales tax for 0.6 percent in 2004. The public could be more willing to vote in favor of a referendum which funds transportation with fractions of a penny. The amount is easier to market to the public.

Lessons Learned

Passing a constitutional amendment which allows for the implementation of 0.5 percent sales tax rates may be a more favorable alternative for voters. In addition, the fraction sales tax could be utilized by local and statewide funding initiatives. The result would better divide the sales tax revenue in the state. The idea of presenting a fraction of a penny for transportation improvements provides for a campaign marketing strategy which may be more beneficial than the 1 percent status-quo. Providing for a 0.5 percent sales tax for a longer period of time would increase feasibility of on-time transit investment in a transit-friendly region. In regions less supportive of transit, the 0.5 percent sales tax can be implemented for a shorter period of time to fund road programs and projects.

4.1.9 MARTA Restrictions

The legislation called MARTA out specifically by regulating the way MARTA could spend the proposed sales tax revenue. In turn, MARTA projects on the proposed list could only be capital investments. No other agency or entity was identified in the bill with specific spending restrictions. The specifics are part of a long history of contention between MARTA and the state legislature. A supporter of the legislative restriction argued that without the restrictions, the revenue from the referendum would go toward inflating MARTA salaries. The supporter argues that MARTA has been very poorly managed in the past, having issues with overly heightened salaries, unacceptable use of taxpayers' dollars, and a record of mismanagement that some counties in the region do not want to fund [3]. The supporter connected the fact that North Fulton County has been paying the MARTA penny for decades and the traffic conditions are unsatisfactory, arguing that the other counties in the region did not want those same conditions applied to their respective counties through the legislation. Because of this, the MARTA legislative restrictions were important to include in the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 [3].

In addition, the 50/50 restriction has been a “source of contention for as long as MARTA has been around” [15]. Under the MARTA Act, a restriction was included to require MARTA

to spend 50 percent of its revenue on capital expenditures and the other 50 percent on operations and maintenance. The Transportation Investment Act of 2010 lifted the 50/50 restriction for three additional years. The Georgia legislature has not lifted the 50/50 restriction other than for small periods of time, causing funding issues every few years. Many believe the legislature's hard grasp on the 50/50 restriction is part of a historical power struggle between MARTA, the city of Atlanta, and the rural and home-rule based legislature. One representative believed it was "caught in the evolution of the legislature from a Democratic body to a Republican body" [15]. Many stakeholders believe that there was initially a sound reason for the restriction, when "MARTA was just starting and federal grants were flowing, it was not unreasonable to say that you should be preserving a part of your money to use as a match for the big grants" [22]. According to a member of the House, the MARTA 50/50 restriction "has become a crisis as funding has become more and more precious." The representative went on to say that "as capital infrastructure is in place and particularly as MARTA has aged and there is need for maintenance, it is in fact a big deal" [15]. Supporters of the 50/50 restriction believe that given the history of MARTA, it is not appropriate to remove the restriction until the agency can prove itself to be financially independent. This discussion was a hot topic in the 2013 legislative session given that an audit was released in late 2012 that gave many specifics to how the agency could improve its financial situation. The discussion is predicted to be a hot topic over the next few years as MARTA attempts to address the line items in the audit.

After the failure of the referendum, Governor Deal called out MARTA as a main factor in the failure of the referendum in the Atlanta region. Many blamed MARTA's dwindling image for the negative image on transit and thus the ultimate failure of the referendum. The MARTA discussion played a role in the failure of the referendum. However, many believe Governor Deal overinflated the MARTA issue, arguing that other issues played a larger role.

Lessons Learned

The MARTA restrictions in the legislation were construed as an "attack" on the system by many in the public. The system was not highly favored by suburban and exurban interests;

however, portions of the inner city and choice rider population came out in opposition of the referendum solely on the affect the referendum had on MARTA. The group raised equity concerns on the lack of funding toward MARTA and the ongoing issues between MARTA and the legislature. The MARTA funding issues should have been addressed before the passage of the legislation. Also, MARTA should not have been singled out in the legislation. Instead, criteria should have been listed in the legislation which listed restrictions on operations and maintenance for all systems, if any. MARTA's image did play a factor in the negative public view of transit; however, the legislature should have addressed the issue prior to the funding initiative.

4.1.10 Lack of Transit Governance

Many noted the lack of legislative efforts on transit governance as a factor in the failure of the referendum. Others disagreed with the premise, arguing that the majority of voters did not understand or comprehend the issue of transit governance, meaning it would not be an issue to the voters. One member of the Atlanta RTR cited the lack of transit governance as more of an issue of organization. When asked what the member would change about the process retrospectively, he said he wished transit governance would have been addressed prior to the project selection process. Without transit governance, many regional transit projects were difficult to organize and sell to the public. It was difficult to determine who would operate and maintain the system as well as where additional funding would come from once the 10-year period expired.

Lessons Learned

In future legislative efforts, it is important to address transit governance before attempting a transportation funding initiative. The lack of understanding and transparency in transit projects on the project list were caused by the lack of transit governance in the region. With transit governance addressed, many issue with public trust in government and anti-transit sentiments could have been avoided. Without transit governance, the RTR was missing a fundamental piece required for project selection.

4.1.11 Constitutionality

The constitutionality of the legislation was called into question by the opposition. As mentioned in chapter 2, the decision was made to go statutory, meaning that the resulting proposal did not need to have enabling legislation. Without enabling legislation, the constitution remained unchanged. Currently the Georgia Constitution allows sales taxes to be implemented on either a statewide or a local level. The regional boundaries had never been attempted in the state prior to the Transportation Investment Act of 2010. Many in the opposition believed the exclusion of an “opt-out” while “forcing” counties into sales taxes in pre-defined regions was unconstitutional. In fact, in other gray areas, prior pieces of legislation have ensured the issue was bypassed. For example, prior tax allocation districts (TADs) were created so that the TADs did not cross county lines. As long as the TADs did not cross county lines, the issue would not be called into question and would not require a constitutional amendment. Constitutional amendments were more difficult to acquire given that it required 2/3rds approval by members in the House and Senate and a statewide public vote to approve on a general election, usually held during even-numbered years. Essentially, all prior attempts at regional discussions had been purposely avoided. Lawyers on both sides gave differing views of the issue. Lawyers on the campaign side told the campaign that the legislation was constitutional. Lawyers on the opposition side reported that the constitutionality of the legislation was questionable and could be challenged. The discussion negatively influenced public trust in government and called the entire process into question. If the Atlanta region had passed the referendum, it was highly likely that the constitutionality of the referendum would have been quickly challenged.

Lessons Learned

To bypass this issue, the House could have decided to attempt a constitutional amendment. Given the numbers in support of the bill in both the House and Senate, the constitutional amendment would have passed. The acquisition of a constitutional amendment would ensure that the legislation was constitutional and would bypass the complaints by the opposition. In turn, it would increase public trust in government.

4.2 The Project List

The project list and several specific projects were highly criticized. However, given that the ballot itself did not include the project list, many believe no single project played a significant factor in the failure of the referendum.

4.2.1 The Project List Itself

The project list contained 157 separate projects. Given this many projects, a voter could criticize any project for it not being where they traveled, lived, or worked. Voters could identify many projects that they “didn’t want to pay for” and thus believe them to be a waste of taxpayers’ dollars. Some suggested that the project list could have been more influential and therefore successful if there were only a few large projects that voters could identify with. The list of regional projects would make a noticeable change in transportation system performance to the areas they were located in. Depending on the political support for transit, the list could possibly be made up of more transit projects and economic development projects when compared to roadway projects given that basic roadway projects would have more difficulty reaching the regional and cost requirements necessary to make the list. In areas politically requiring less transit investment, a “project” could be a program, like road pavement or intersection improvements assigned a program cost. Placing programs such as this instead of displaying a large amount of local projects on the project list would create a more cohesive understanding of the project list and its effect on the regional transportation infrastructure.

Areas in the inner city were exposed to the BeltLine project, Clifton Corridor project, and other city-related transit and roadway improvements. In the suburbs, roadway and intersection improvements were highlighted. Still, designing a single marketing phrase to sum up the project list was difficult. On the other hand, the opposition had one phrase that resonated, “the largest tax increase in Georgia’s history.” The campaign was left with a jumble of projects to sell to different areas of the region. Instead of pushing regionalism, the project list forced the campaign to divide the region into subareas. The division suggests the level of regionalism on the project list was not as high as members of the RTR had hoped.

Some suggested that placing 157 projects on a list where many projects seemed to have no connection to one another was setting the initiative up for failure. A member of the campaign noted that this number of projects was a real challenge to “selling” the initiative. The campaign was tasked with placing a 157 project list on a billboard or in a commercial advertisement which needed to relate to the public. In response, the campaign targeted commercial advertisements and billboards with projects by location. However, a member of the campaign retrospectively concluded that a 157 project list was a lot to digest [27]. The sentiment in the region was “what is in it for me?” A member of the campaign believed that the region was not ready for “regional thinking” and “a big picture” transportation improvement [27].

Given that the TSPLOST was designed, and historically functioned, as a repeatable referendum, the outcome of the first vote would reflect on the viability of future referenda. The next referenda could include a project list with projects that built upon the initially supported set of projects. Some suggested that a more politically favorable list, even though it would not initially please all of the outlying groups, would have been more successful at the ballot. Then, the next referenda could have included the more controversial projects and then would be more likely to pass given that the first list was fiscally responsible and politically favorable.

Lessons Learned

The large size of the project list played a role in the public understanding of the referendum. The 157 seemingly separate projects did not appear to be as regional in nature to the public as it was initially designed for by the RTR. The project list could possibly have been divided up and presented as programs, similar to the project lists of the three regions which ultimately passed their respective referenda in Georgia. The project list must be designed so that it can be marketed by the campaign as a cohesive, regional plan. The campaign was given a project list with no clear marketing phrase to place on a billboard and in commercial advertisements. In addition, a more politically favorable list of projects, with less transit projects and more congestion mitigation and intersection improvement projects

could possibly have received less criticism and a more favorable public vote for the first round of a typically repeatable referenda process.

4.2.2 Transit versus Roadways

In the legislative phase, discussions occurred on putting caps of 15 to 20 percent as the maximum level of transit investment on the project list because “there were major concerns that transit would be off the charts” in Atlanta and it would turn into “a funding mechanism for what many believed to be a transit remaking of Atlanta” [3]. However, these caps were never implemented in the legislation. Instead, 52 percent of funding on the project list was devoted to transit.

Many opponents criticized the level of transit projects on the list arguing that the transit projects did not provide for congestion relief and were far too expensive. The anti-transit side argued that many transit projects on the list were not fiscally responsible, calling to question the public distrust in government and raising concerns that the transit projects would not be completed on-time and on-budget. Opponents argued that transit projects were not comparable to roadway project in terms of the taxpayer’s return on investment. The argument created a noticeable divide in the regional discussion seen earlier in the project selection process.

In addition, the opposition argued that transit was not feasible in the region because the region did not have sufficient density to warrant transit. The opposition often mentioned the statistic that only 4 percent of the region used transit. One legislator argued that the opposition struggled with the concept of subsidization with their continued complaints that transit investment was heavily subsidized by taxpayers’ dollars. The legislator argues that the opposition did not understand that both roadway and transit infrastructure were heavily subsidized [1].

Some opponents pushed for transit to be devoted solely to Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) given that the costs would be much lower and more feasible [39]. BRT projects received an unexpectedly higher level of public support when compared to heavy rail and light rail alternatives. The opposition favored the lower costs and similarity to the Xpress service

that many outer county areas favored and utilized for their commute.

Overall, many against transit were also against the inclusion of MARTA. 17 percent of the transit projects included capital improvements to the MARTA system. The MARTA improvements included train control systems upgrades, elevator and escalator rehabilitation, unified transit communications infrastructure, passenger information system, tunnel and platform lighting, tunnel ventilation rehabilitation, electrical power rehabilitation, track rehabilitation, aerial structure rehabilitation, and improvements to the MARTA Airport Station [36]. Given that MARTA held a negative image for many in the outer counties, many were angered by the inclusion of these projects. The outer counties did not want to begin funding a repeatable tax, a “never-ending” tax, which helped to “bail out the MARTA system.” One legislator argues that the MARTA projects should not have been in the project list, “especially considering the financial challenges that MARTA has right now” including some of the “general maintenance of escalators.” The legislator argued that it was difficult to “justify expanding using additional capital” [1].

In addition, the opposition focused on the vague descriptions of the transit projects on the project list. Project descriptions were vague given that transit governance had not been determined. Also, the transit projects were at varying levels of completion. Many projects on the list were not actually slated to be constructed upon passage of the referendum; instead, the projects would be given funding for corridor planning, engineering, and environmental review and assessment. Because of this, these projects did not know what type of transit technology would be ultimately chosen.

The GRTA Xpress service and the Regional Senior Mobility Call Center were essentially the only transit projects included on the project list in the outer counties. The inner counties received the BeltLine project, the Clifton Corridor project, the streetcars, MARTA improvements, and MARTA extensions. Clayton County received the Clayton County Local Bus Service, a transit system that was discontinued due to inadequate funding a year prior. Overall, the impact of transit investment in the inner counties was substantially higher than in the outer counties. Provided that 52 percent of the project list included transit investment, the public in the outer counties believed that their revenue would go toward

transit projects that they would never utilize.

In addition, transit projects were not given long-term operations and maintenance funding sources. The assumption was made by many that the projects would forever be funded by the repeatable referendum. The projects with preliminary engineering completed would likely be placed on the second project list for construction, along with a similar lack of long-term operations and maintenance funds. Many felt the process would be cyclical and the 10-County region would be forced to continually fund transit projects.

The Sierra Club opposed the project list, saying that it would put commuter rail off for at least another decade. Only one commuter rail project was included on the final investment list. The project funded the preliminary engineering of a possible commuter rail line from Atlanta to Griffin. The Sierra Club believed that more funding should be put toward commuter rail, arguing that commuter rail was the most feasible transportation solution for the development patterns of the Atlanta region. Following the process, this project would most likely be the only commuter rail project pushed forward in the 10-year funding period. Then, the commuter rail would be built, only if a funding source for construction was acquired. This would be at least 10-years after the passage of the July 31, 2012 referendum. Given that the transportation crisis would be “solved”, more than likely, no other funding sources for transit would appear. Thus, any other commuter rail projects in the region would most likely not be constructed in the next few decades. The repercussions of this decision, the Sierra Club argues, would be dire.

The discussion against transit investment fueled the opposition. Still, many argue that the transit issue did not play a significant role in the failure of the referendum. They argue that the national issues such as the economy, anti-tax sentiments, and public distrust in government, discussed later in this chapter, played a much larger role in the final outcome of the referendum.

Lessons Learned

Though many groups disagreed, the transit percentage was abnormally high when compared to the constituency represented in the 10-County Atlanta region. To ensure a more favorable outcome, the project list should reflect the overall constituency of the entire region. The transit percentage would have been more acceptable with a carefully selected set of new transit capital projects. The MARTA capital investments should have been addressed through the MARTA funding issues prior to the project list selection process. Including such controversial projects along with the negative MARTA image did not produce a favorable outcome from the outer county constituency.

Given that the referendum was designed to be repeatable, the first project list would have been more favorable with a roadway heavy list. The next referendum would then be more feasible for transit investment following a positive on-time and on-budget delivery and increased confidence of voters during the decade prior. Overall, only 23 of the 157 projects on the list were categorized as transit projects; still, these projects included 52 percent of the total revenue from the proposed sales tax. Of these 23 projects, only eight of the projects produced new transit construction. The other projects on the list were either improvements to an existing system, continued funding of an existing system, or funding of the preliminary engineering phase of the transit project. Projects of this nature should not have been included on the project list. The repeatable referendum must receive a favorable public image, especially during the first referendum. Projects must be selected based on the measured impact on the public. Projects which fund construction and will impact the current transportation infrastructure in a way the public will acknowledge must be given a higher priority than maintenance or preliminary engineering funding of transit projects. Projects which can be funded in the first six years of the sales tax should also be given higher priority. In this way, the noticeable success of the process and the improvement of the current transportation system would allow for future viability of repeatable referenda.

Overall, the public in the Atlanta region holds a negative view on transit investment. The process created by the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 has the potential to slowly change the view of the public through successful implementation of transit projects.

The lesson learned from the failure of the referendum is to begin small and work up to the percentage of transit included in the project list. In partnership, the legislature must address transit governance and in turn funding and connectivity issues between the multiple agencies currently servicing the region.

4.2.3 Congestion Mitigation versus Economic Development

The opposition especially criticized the projects that were designed for economic development goals. The opposition argued that the mandate of the bill was for congestion mitigation, saying economic development should not have been considered as a criterion for the project list. A report written by the Georgia Public Policy Foundation, a conservative transportation think-tank in the region, argued that “encouraging economic development and creating a cleaner environment are admirable and desirable goals, but not related to transportation and should not be supported by a transportation tax” [39]. One member of the campaign retrospectively argued that as the project list was designed it should have focused solely on traffic mitigation. If the project list had consisted of a smaller number of high dollar projects and programs, economic development could have played a larger role. However, given that the project list was a collection of 157 separate projects, the criteria for project selection should have centered on congestion mitigation [27]. On the other hand, another member argued that the criteria were initially not just congestion mitigation, saying “the bigger overarching goal was economic development.” He believed that the message of economic development got lost, arguing that the entire initiative was about quality of life, economic sustainability, and prosperity, not just about relieving traffic [26].

Essentially there was a divide between the criteria set by the GDOT director of planning and RTR members and the understanding of opponents from the legislature who only wanted congestion mitigation. The issue resonated well with opponents; economic development was a difficult sell for the campaign. The issue became a key discussion for projects such as the BeltLine and other transit projects. One local official cited the congestion mitigation and economic development discussion as the “most problematic” issue about the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 [19]. A member of the business community argued that the “truth

in numbers” was that if the region could do everything it wanted to do, congestion in the region would still not go down; at best it would stay the same. He reasoned that the best the region could hope to do was not to lose ground; the commute was not going to get better. The truth was that the referendum list would allow a 20 minute commute to remain 20 minutes [26]. Targeting solely congestion mitigation is not cost beneficial to the public; “managing congestion and reducing congestion are two very separate things” [19]. It was difficult to sell the public on the hard truth of the continuing levels of congestion in the region.

When the campaign focused on congestion mitigation with a number of their popular billboards and commercial advertisements, it came under criticism because of the narrowed focus. A member of the campaign argued that economic development was hard to sell on a billboard because it was an “intellectual argument” that many did not understand and ultimately did not want to hear [27]. One member of the business community admitted that the campaign needed to better link job creation and economic prosperity to the project list. The member argued that it was tough to do this the first time around [26]. One member argued that economic development and job creation was a good criterion for a rural district because they did not have a traffic congestion issue. However, Atlanta has a huge traffic congestion issue and thus the criteria for the region should have been strictly congestion mitigation [3]. As mentioned earlier, there was a fundamental divide between the ultimate goal of the legislation and the criteria developed by the RTR.

Lessons Learned

To counteract this issue, the legislature could have imposed strict criteria which ensured that congestion mitigation would be the ultimate goal of the legislation. Overall, the goal from legislation to the campaign must remain constant. The project list should have included both congestion mitigation and economic development projects on the list. However, the majority of projects and percentage of funding should have been devoted to projects which address congestion mitigation because the constituency favored the criterion. If economic development is included on the list, a marketable campaign must embrace and properly sell

the idea of economic development to the public. In addition, the campaign must effectively explain the issue of growth and congestion mitigation in the Atlanta region. The percentage of economic development and congestion mitigation on the project list must be determined based on the level of public support for economic development, especially the support of leaders for the criterion.

4.2.4 Controversial Projects

The BeltLine

The Mayor of Atlanta was a strong advocate for the Atlanta BeltLine project, pushing for close to \$600 million in funding for the project as part of the referendum. The \$600 million would go toward two transit lines, approximately five miles of transit on the East and West of Atlanta. The project also included five miles of transit connecting the city of Atlanta from East to West, a missing connection many believe has reduced walkability and accessibility in the city. Given that Mayor Kasim Reed's support for the referendum was crucial, members of the executive committee included this large amount of funding for the BeltLine on the project list. Later in the process, the BeltLine met a great deal of public resistance. Many criticized the BeltLine, arguing that the BeltLine was not a "regional" project. They went further saying that the project was clearly for economic development and not congestion mitigation. One legislator argued that it was a major violation of the original intent of the legislation saying that the legislature "did not pass a stimulus bill in 2010, the legislature passed a traffic relief bill in 2010" and called the BeltLine project's inclusion a "bait and switch" [3]. In addition, the BeltLine raised equity concerns based on its effect on the surrounding communities, many being historically Black neighborhoods. Some long-time residents might be pushed out of the areas surrounding the BeltLine due to increased property values. Many choice riders could lose their proximity and transit access to their place of employment. This particular issue is further discussed in Section 4.7. Many of those interviewed believed the BeltLine was a great project and should be funded, but felt the project should not have been included on the final investment list.

The McCollum Airport

Similarly, the public criticized the airport project for not addressing congestion mitigation. The McCollum Airport held a strong case for job creation and economic development, boasting the economic impact of \$1.2 million per year and 800 jobs in Cobb County [19]. However, economic impact did not sell to the public. Many across the region did not see the regional benefit of investing in the McCollum Airport, believing the project list should only include congestion mitigation projects. A member of the campaign retrospectively wishes the project had not been included on the final investment list [27].

The Northwest Corridor Project

The original Northwest Corridor Project, as seen in the draft investment list, proposed a fixed guideway project from Midtown to Cumberland. Cobb County has a long history of anti-transit sentiments, only offering CCT bus services and GRTA Xpress commuter services. The project would have provided Cobb County with a fixed guideway project connecting Cumberland to the MARTA Arts Center Station in Midtown Atlanta. After the agreement on the draft investment list, legislators representing Cobb County came out in opposition of the project. The group of legislators held public meetings and the public opinion of the project decreased in the county. Members of the RTR acknowledged the opposition and proposed an amendment to the project list. During the amendment process, the funding was reduced for the transit line, instead putting it toward an enhanced transit service from the Town Center area to connect with MARTA in Midtown Atlanta. The rest of the funds were diverted toward intersection improvements at three intersections in Cobb County. Many transit advocates were angered by the reallocation of funds toward roadway projects. However, many in the county were pleased by the amendment. Throughout the process, anti-transit sentiments in Cobb County were directed at the Northwest Corridor Project. Others in the county were happy to see transit. According to those interviewed, there are still “racist” and “classist” emotions in Cobb County surrounding the issue of transit that did play a role in the failure of the referendum (history discussed in chapter 2).

However, the county has become more diverse in race and culture, bringing with it a

decrease in citizens with anti-transit sentiments. The Northwest Corridor Project provides an in depth case study of the progress of the historical issues of race and culture in the Atlanta region [19]. Recent studies show promising changes in the public support for transit in Cobb County. According to a recent survey, nearly 75 percent of respondents reported never using public transit for their commute. The numbers suggest that access to public transit needs improvement in Cobb County. Furthermore, in the same study, 62.5 percent of respondents favored improvements to rail transit and 21.1 percent favored improvement to bus transit [93]. Even more promising, another survey showed that 50 percent of respondents chose improving the public transit system over building more roadways. The survey showed that 57 percent would favor adding rail transit service within the county and connecting with MARTA [91]. The recent results show positive trends for transit support in the county. The Northwest Corridor project is currently moving forward with preliminary engineering.

The Clifton Corridor Project

The Clifton Corridor Project called to question equity concerns in the inner counties. After being promised a rail line out to South Fulton, the project was not put on the final project list. Instead, one of the more affluent neighborhoods near Emory University and the Center for Disease Control was slated to receive a new MARTA rail line and connection. Though many believed the project was warranted, the main complaint was its inclusion on equity principles. The project fueled the discussion of race and class in the region. Many believe the discussion drastically reduced the level of support from inner city voters.

Lessons Learned

The BeltLine is generally supported in the city of Atlanta and the surrounding communities; however it is generally not supported outside of the city. The BeltLine was a “regional” project for the city of Atlanta but was not a “regional” project for the entire Atlanta region. Because of this, alternative funding sources should have been acquired for the project. The BeltLine project already currently receives its own smaller funding source, though the referendum would have speed up the process and placed transit on the BeltLine within a

decade. As of now, the process will possibly take over a decade, depending on future funding opportunities. The McCollum Airport also was not generally supported by a regional constituency. Because of this, the project also should have been funded by an alternative source. The Northwest Corridor brought about lessons surrounding politics and transit in Cobb County. The criticisms on the Northwest Corridor Project could have been avoided given greater transparency between legislators and members of the RTR. As soon as the members of the RTR were informed of the negative public opinion of the Northwest Corridor Project, they drafted an amendment to adjust funding to a more favorable level. The actions of the members of the RTR were one of the main success stories of the amendment process during the project selection process. The members addressed public comments received during the time period and adjusted the funding in the project list accordingly. Though many were upset about the reallocation of funds, the decision to change the project list likely had a positive overall effect on the results of the referendum. The Clifton Corridor Project also was highly supported by surrounding communities, but received criticism from the rest of the region. Projects of this type should be studied before they are included in the project list. As mentioned before, only a few projects of this type should be included given their controversial nature. If the McCollum Airport and the BeltLine were excluded from the list, the Northwest Corridor and Clifton Corridor project, two possible connections to the MARTA system, would have received less overall criticism. These two projects were arguably more “regional” in nature when compared to the BeltLine and McCollum Airport projects. Overall, during the project selection process, it is important to analyze projects based on their potential support by the general public. Projects that might receive criticism should be avoided, especially during the first regional referendum.

4.2.5 The Atlanta Regional Transportation Roundtable

The marked differences between the needs and wants of the constituency when compared to the decisions of the representatives on the RTR show another fundamental divide. The RTR approved a list they believed their constituency wanted and would approve. The RTR also was subjected to public comment which many believe was skewed toward a more transit

friendly, urban interest. The location of the RTR meetings, held in downtown Atlanta, might have played a factor. Also, the transit advocates who some believed to have the strongest voices were located in the center of the city, and could easily attend the RTR meetings to make public comments. The members of the RTR might have overestimated the level of support for transit. Some may not have realized the effect transit projects with high costs in a recession would have on their constituency.

Some of those interviewed believed the overall structure of the RTR allowed for an equal representation of the entire region. Each city and county had equal representation on the full regional transportation roundtable. Others completely disagree, arguing that the mayors on the RTR had undue influence on the project selection and should not have been given as much power. One member of the legislature argued that the cities were given far too much influence in the project selection process because currently the majority of the region lives in unincorporated areas [1]. The discussion has become more prominent as the political battle over power between cities and counties has been silently waged for years.

Some believed that the make-up of the executive committee was not as representative as the RTR. Many believe the original make-up of the executive committee was designed to ensure lower transit approval and the control of outer counties. Instead, some members on the executive committee changed their personal views on transit investment and its potential for the Atlanta region. Officials close to the project selection process believe it was one member of the executive committee who became a swing vote in favor of transit [14]. The executive committee member's unexpected support of transit inflated the final percentage of transit in the project list. Generally, the membership of the executive committee and RTR differed in their level of support for transit investment when compared to the legislature and the overall views of their constituency. The difference played a factor in the ultimate level of transit on the project list as well as the failure of the referendum.

Lessons Learned

The RTR and the executive committee are generally more supportive of transit investment. The legislature is less supportive because it is controlled by a home-rule, rural system.

The RTR and executive committee did not realize the affect the nation issues such as the economy, distrust in government, and other national pressures had on local initiatives. Following these growing sentiments, the Atlanta region constituency reflected the views of the rural legislature more so than the views of the RTR. The resulting list contained an inflated percentage of transit investment. It is important to ensure that project selection is based on the current views of the constituency. This can be provided by constant and “real” public input throughout the project selection process. Also, to ensure the views of the constituency does not change between project selection and the referendum, the distance between the dates should be minimized.

4.3 Public Input

The RTR boasted that 200,000 residents were involved in the entire process. However, many complained that the level of involvement was overstated. Some mentioned being discriminated against at the public meetings if they had negative comments. After October 13, 2011, the project list was set and could not be altered. From that date until the vote on July 31, 2012 the public scrutinized the project list but the proponents were unable to change the project list. Some in the public had not heard of the project list and process until a month prior to the referendum, when the campaign began playing advertisements during the Olympics and placing advertisements on billboards. Overall public trust in government decreased given that many felt they were unable to given their input in the process and project list.

Lessons Learned

Though the majority of RTR members and ARC staff mentioned that a large amount of public input occurred, the RTR arguably did not receive a representative sample of public input. Some in the public were unaware of the project selection process and could not give input unless they happened to discover the process before the October 13, 2011 date. To ensure project selection is based on the current views of the constituency, the process must be speed up by allowing for a vote immediately after the project list is solidified. Two years between passage of the legislation and the public referendum allowed for too long of

a period for public comment without the ability to amend the project list. The project selection process should occur as close as possible to the date of the referendum so that criticism can only occur during a time period when the project list can be amended. Also, the public input process must ensure that the public feels their voice is heard. Public input should be “real,” meaning the public, not necessarily the RTR, must believe they were given the proper amount of time to voice their opinion on the project list. If a large amount of criticism is heard in a particular area, the RTR should attempt to amend the project list accordingly, as was seen successful completed on the Northwest Corridor project. An effort should be made to ensure that a representative sample of the public is able to offer public input in the project list. Implementing surveys and studies throughout the process should be used to ensure an accurate public opinion.

4.4 Unusual Opposition

The opposition shocked many in the public; it was difficult to envision the partnership of three groups who normally would never work together, and would certainly never share a table. The close partnership between the Sierra Club and the Tea Party was unexpected given that the Sierra Club’s support of transit was in conflict with the Tea Party’s opposition to transit investment in the region. Still, the group became close by strategizing and even celebrating the failure of the referendum together on the night of the election. When deciding between if they should vote “yes” or “no” on the referendum, one negative comment can easily sway a voter. Generally, it is much easier for a voter to reject a tax increase. The opposition was highly visible and argued many different reasons to reject the referendum, reasons which sometimes bypassed party lines. The opposition was highly successful in putting doubt in the minds of all types of voters, ranging from inner city transit advocates to rural housewives.

Lessons Learned

Many in the process were not surprised by the opposition of the Tea Party. However, the other two main groups could have been addressed at an earlier time. As mentioned in chapter 3, the Sierra Club’s decision to oppose the referendum was a split decision. If the RTR had addressed a few more of the Sierra Club’s issues, they might not have come out

in opposition. If the RTR had addressed the equity issue in the South Fulton and placed the long promised transit line on the project list, the DeKalb NAACP might have not come out in opposition. Addressing the powerful stakeholders in the project selection process is important when ensuring limited controversy and opposition to a referendum. Both groups were in attendance and gave public comments at RTR meetings. Through improving the public input process by implementing the lessons learned discussed earlier, these stakeholders might have been better heard by the RTR and addressed accordingly.

4.5 The Campaign

The campaign played a large role in the failure of the referendum. Many believe the project list and process was far too difficult to sell for the campaign and that the referendum was going to fail, regardless. However, many blamed the campaign for the failure and provided criticisms, discussed in the following subsections.

4.5.1 Congestion Mitigation versus Economic Development

The campaign pushed congestion mitigation over economic development. The campaign did mention job creation in its advertisements. However, the main strategy and focus of the campaign focused on how the project list would “untie Atlanta’s transportation knot.” One local official believed that the campaign focused on congestion mitigation because “they knew that it would pass a campaign” [19]. However, the numbers behind congestion mitigation did not show a proper balance between costs and benefits. In truth, the cost point that is technically required to actually reduce congestion is not cost beneficial. The opposition called the campaign out on the numbers and the public opinion of the campaign and the project list suffered. In the long-term, the referendum would have had little impact on the reduction of congestion in the region and the support of future referenda would be reduced.

Lessons Learned

The campaign should devise a strategy to have an honest discussion with the public on economic development and congestion mitigation. The public must understand the truth behind the numbers and make an informed decision for the future of the region. The

difference between congestion relief and congestion management must be well understood to ensure public trust in government and long-term viability of the funding source. By simply ignoring the issue, the strategy backfired on the campaign and decreased overall trust in government.

4.5.2 Marketing the Referendum

The campaign struggled with selling 157 separate projects on a billboard or in a 30 second television advertisement. In contrast, the opposition resonated well with their phrase “The largest tax increase in Georgia history, vote NO to the 1 percent regional sales tax.” Also, the campaign message of “Untie Atlanta” received negative responses from voters in the Atlanta region that did not necessarily identify with Atlanta. The message focused on downtown Atlanta while targeting suburban commuters. The suburban commuters did not want their money going toward the city and the Downtown audience also was essentially ignored, assuming that they would vote in favor of a 52 percent transit project list. Some believe the regions surrounding the Atlanta region were similarly affected by the campaign advertisements on billboards. The voters were misinformed and believed the referendum in their region was connected to the city of Atlanta. Not wanting to fund downtown investment, citizens in regions surrounding the Atlanta region voted against their respective referenda.

In addition, the members of the RTR and other local officials whose support for the referendum would influence their constituency remained silent due to many upcoming re-election campaigns. The timing of the vote reduced the campaign’s ability to market the referendum by influencing the level of support from the local level.

Lessons Learned

The campaign must determine a strategy which can market the project list in a short time period and will resonate with the public. To obtain a successful marketing strategy, the RTR must produce a list that provides a cohesive transportation vision. More so, this vision must match the transportation needs of the constituency. Also, the RTR, the legislature, and the campaign must agree and maintain the strategy throughout the process. Local officials must play a key role in discussing the campaign on a grass-roots level in their community.

Without their strong support, the local areas did not have an advocate they could identify with.

4.5.3 Responding to the Opposition

In the beginning, the proponents attempted to address all comments by opposition. As the comments increased, the proponents were unable to continue responding, leaving criticisms and complaints during debates, on social media, and on media outlets unanswered. The result presented misinformation and confusion to the public. Many retrospectively wished they had addressed the concerns of the opposition.

Lessons Learned

Any negative criticism or comments on social media, media, and debates should be addressed in writing and in person with facts and reason and as soon as possible. The campaign could further target the issue of distrust in government by providing statistics of on-time and on-budget delivery of previous transportation projects. Leaving criticism unanswered propagates misinformation and confusion surrounding the issue. The campaign could divert some funding away from advertisements and more toward manpower addressing the criticisms of the opposition.

4.5.4 Attract the Right Crowd

Given that projections of voter turnout for the election were set to be around 375,000 to 400,000 people, the campaign's initial goal was to win 200,001 votes. They concentrated on achieving that number and on getting nontraditional people who do not normally vote, to vote yes. The campaign exceeded its goal by getting 254,663 yes votes; however, 675,535 ballots were cast [7]. Members of the campaign did not expect the high level of turnout and believed this was primarily caused by the overarching national issues. One member believed that the influence of national issues was at its peak and thought the campaign inadvertently heightened interest in overarching national issues [27]. Another member agreed saying, the election was essentially the first moment when people could protest national issues [26].

Lessons Learned

Numbers show that the campaign reached its goal of 200,000 votes. However, the controversial issue garnered a large number of votes against the referendum. The campaign targeted individuals likely to vote for the referendum. They also specifically targeted areas and sold different projects based on the area. These strategies might have been fruitful. However, the billboard advertisements did not resonate as well with the opposition. The billboards affected members in the outer counties as well as members of other regions surrounding the Atlanta region as they traveled through the region. The campaign's presence was arguably too prevalent. More targeted voting when compared to billboard advertisements would allow for a more structured attempt at reaching the correct voters. Minimizing the campaign's presence through less extravagant and "glossy" advertisements would resonate better with voters who are still undecided or leaning toward voting against the referendum. Also, the campaign must minimize its overall presence with the voters who are identified as being more likely to vote against the referendum.

4.5.5 Timing

The campaign strategy was to essentially target the public with increased amounts of commercial advertisements and billboards during the last month before the election. Some believe the campaign remained silent while the opposition attended debates and presented their case to the public, arguing that many voters had already decided against the referendum before the campaign began. Others disagree, arguing that the campaign was too loud, too early and began the Tea Party's opposition. Also, some criticize the campaign, arguing that the campaign placed too many advertisements at one time. The overabundance of advertisements made many believe it was "too good to be true" and that the campaign had far too much financial support. Many believe the campaign oversold the referendum. Some argue that the consultants and officials who the campaign relied on for their strategy and preparation were not well informed on the Georgia campaign world and thus should not have been utilized as the campaign prototype.

Lessons Learned

The campaign must be started earlier so that it can address the issues before the voters have made their decisions, especially when opposition is strong in the beginning. In the age of early voting, the original campaign strategy of working in the last 72 hours is no longer valid. The campaign must start earlier to address concerns before negative comments are heard from the opposition. In addition, the campaign must be careful not to oversell the advertisements, designing the strategy so that they do not seem over-funded or as if they are overselling their message. Also, the campaign must strategize on a situational basis. Georgia and Colorado contain different politics, rules, and constituencies. Strategy should be primarily based on previous campaigns held in Georgia such as previous local sales tax campaigns.

4.5.6 Spending Millions

The biggest criticism from the opposition toward the campaign was the large amount of donations the campaign received from the business community. The campaign spent more than \$8 million, running a campaign which was highly visible with expensive advertisements during the Olympics as well as a large number of billboards across the Atlanta region. The public questioned where the money came from and why the donors funded the campaign. Many businesses stood to gain if the referendum passed. The entire campaign seemed political to the general public. The public trust in government was affected by the visibly large amount of campaign spending. In many ways, the excessive amount of campaign financing and the method in which it was spent backfired on the campaign.

Lessons Learned

During an economic recession where the constituency is dissatisfied with government, campaign spending should be at a minimum. The majority of campaign spending would have resonated better through grass-roots campaigning. By utilizing grass-roots methods, more staff members could be hired and the money could be spent in a more discrete fashion so that the public does not notice the amount the campaign is paid over than the importance

of the message on the advertisements.

4.6 Suburban versus Urban Interests

4.6.1 ITP vs. OTP

The political barrier separated by Interstate 285 played a role in the failure of the referendum. Similarly, the two portions of the region have different transportation needs and struggle to agree upon a single transportation vision. Voters who identify as OTP typically support less transit investment and more roadway and intersection improvements. Voters who identify as ITP are more likely to support more transit investment along with roadway and intersection improvements. Voters identifying as OTP commute into the city with their automobile or utilize the GRTA Xpress service. Others commute to their place of work either in another county or their own county with their automobile. A likely transportation vision for OTP voters is to improve intersections and roadways so that their commute time is lowered. A project list would likely fund the GRTA Xpress service as well as the Senior Call Mobility Center. Voters identifying as ITP commute out of the city with their automobile or using transit or commute within the city with their automobile, using transit, or walking. A likely transportation vision for ITP voters is to improve transit connectivity, walkability, and bikeability while improving intersections and roadways around the city. The two groups differ in many ways, making it difficult to agree on a transportation vision and project list.

Lessons Learned

The size of the region created a divide between two separate transportation visions voting on one single project list. In truth, the project list reflected a transportation vision similar to the ITP voters, as shown by the results that the City of Atlanta supported the transportation referendum 58 to 42 percent. As mentioned earlier, the region should be, at a minimum, divided in two subregions. In this scenario, the two regions, likely the inner MARTA counties and the remaining outer counties would have two separate project lists. Also, tying three (Fulton, DeKalb, and Clayton Counties) to five (Fulton, DeKalb, Clayton, Cobb and Gwinnett Counties) of the inner MARTA counties into a region would ensure

regionalism by also allowing for a cohesive transportation vision. In this scenario, the remaining counties would be allowed to create regions of two or more counties to provide for a referendum in the region. The aforementioned ability to “opt-in” should be included and must be restricted to a specific time period.

4.6.2 Understanding Regionalism

Many criticized the list because certain projects were not near their workplace or home. The idea of regionalism, an idea used to formulate the project list, was difficult to sell to the general public. A member of the campaign recalls feeling that the Atlanta region “was not ready” to think regionally [27]. More so, the region was not ready to be a region.

Lessons Learned

The region was unable to think “regionally” because the region was far too diverse and did not have a cohesive transportation vision. In future initiatives, smaller regions would possibly produce more favorable results given that they are more likely to share a common transportation vision. The core understanding of regionalism begins with a common interest to work toward. It is difficult to bypass home-rule politics under these circumstances.

4.7 Equity

The campaign expected the inner city vote to go relatively in their favor. There was an internal struggle in the inner city with the project list and the exclusion of a MARTA extension which had been promised for years. In addition, the legislation did not provide an exemption for DeKalb and Fulton Counties, requiring that the counties pay two pennies after successful passage of the referendum, placing additional taxes on lower income family in the inner city that had already been funding the MARTA system for decades. The Black community criticized a number of projects, including the BeltLine, as an economic development project which displaced the Black community, many being lower income, away from their jobs and homes. In addition, many of these displaced communities could be categorized as choice riders, the primary customers for the MARTA system. In the terms of the MARTA restrictions in the legislation, equity issues were raised. Some believed the

MARTA restrictions were racially motivated and hurt the lower income, Black population. Instead, some pushed for the failure of the referendum so that a new initiative would address MARTA's funding crisis, and "restore MARTA." Many believe discussion on race and class brought about by the referendum prompted the unexpectedly low percentage yes votes in the inner city.

Lessons Learned

The equity issues closely parallel the failure of the MARTA referendum of 1968, discussed in chapter 2, where one primary reason reported for the failure of the referendum was the lack of support by the Black community. The MARTA referendum of 1971 passed, one main reason reportedly being the involvement of the Black community in planning and discussions. Even given the heavy involvement of the project selection process, many in the Black community felt their issues had not been addressed. The project selection process did not function in a way which made constituency comfortable about the process and outcome. As mentioned earlier, the public comment portion was limited in time and functionality. The majority of the public was not aware of the project selection process, and thus did not attend the meetings.

Misinformation and distrust in government coupled with anger and claims of racism could have been avoided given more involvement and public awareness prior to the selection of the project list. Black leaders could have been consulted and projects important to their constituency would have then been included. The lack of projects addressing the lower income, Black communities angered too many of the members the campaign projected to vote overwhelmingly in favor of the referendum. It is important to understand the constituency needed to pass the referendum when determining the project list.

4.8 The Role of the Media

Many felt that one of the biggest obstacles to the campaign was the media [27]. One member of the business community believed the media was not "a friend of the campaign." Every opportunity the media had to "be a whistle blower" or showcase the opposition they did, certainly more often than they provided the opportunity for the campaign to showcase its

side. Many believed the level of attention given to the leaders of the Tea Party, Sierra Club, and DeKalb NAACP was skewed when compared to the proponents. Many believed there was an unequal public representation of the proponents and opponents and the constituency they represented. Polling conducted two months before the referendum showed that a total of 75.5 percent of respondents reported being either “somewhat familiar” or “familiar” with the transportation sales tax voter referendum that will be on all ballots [72]. It can be assumed that many of the respondents familiar with the referendum read at least one media article that discussed negative views toward the transportation referendum. It is possible that these interactions alone may have influenced their decision.

Lessons Learned

As mentioned earlier, the campaign must respond to all negative attacks, especially attacks featured on major local news sources. The media played a role in the failure of the referendum. However, the majority of the players in the process could not influence how the media portrayed the opposition and the overall process. The most influential player in the process is the campaign and how efficiently they approach the media and the public statements of the opposition.

4.9 Overarching National Issues

Though the above issues were mentioned as contributing factors to the failure of the referendum, the majority of those interviewed argued that overarching national issues played the most significant role. National issues such as the economy, the looming presidential election, the anti-tax movement, and overall distrust in all forms of government affected the local political climate in the Atlanta region. Even in Los Angeles, a location which is normally highly supportive of sales tax referenda and transit investment did not pass their referendum around the same time. This suggests that the national issues impacted more than just the referendum in the Atlanta region [26].

4.9.1 The Economy

In December of 2007, the rapid decline of the nation’s housing and commercial real estate markets officially pushed the national economy into a recession. The event, today known as the Great Recession, is considered by many as the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression in the 1930s. In 2008 and 2009, the situation worsened when the financial sector crashed. At its worst, Georgia reportedly lost close to 26,000 jobs per month [82]. In 2010, the legislature was hopeful that the economy would improve before the referendum and the voters would be “more receptive” to a tax increase [1]. By 2012, many lost hope, calling the economic situation the “new normal.” The public was greatly affected by the Great Recession. Some members of the legislature argue that the referendum might have had a better chance of passing if it had been held in 2010 in comparison.

The state of Georgia was hit especially hard. Household incomes were at historically low levels. Median household income fell by nearly \$2,000 from 2010 to 2011, a median household income level comparable to values in the early 1990s. Also, annual wages for the median Georgia worker fell by more than \$2,500 which was the most substantial decline in the nation [82]. According to the most recent report by the Georgia Budget & Policy Institute, Georgia now ranks 5th in the nation for the total percentage of residents living in poverty and 10th highest for total percentage of children living in poverty [82].

The Great Recession has reduced annual pay for low- and middle-income Georgians by thousands of dollars since the recession began [82]. Georgia’s low- and middle-income families have characteristically high unemployment rates, depressed wages, shrunken incomes, and high poverty rates [82]. Given that the sales tax is regressive, passage of the referendum could have produced a more pronounced effect on the low- and middle-income levels. Since many in the outer counties were greatly affected by the recession, many were not supportive of another regressive tax.

In general, many were against placing undue pressure on other struggling families during the Great Recession. Many were against taxing the public during a recession, arguing that families needed all of the money they were earning. Generally, discussing a new tax is unpopular during a recession. Following this view, the economy caused many officials and

leaders to remain silent or come out against the referendum. Much of the opposition was fueled by the economic emotions and pressures from the Great Recession. Many interviewees mentioned the economy as one of the main driving factors to the defeat of the referendum.

Lessons Learned

The local officials and legislators could not have anticipated the economic situation in 2012. However, legislation must allow flexibility for future unknown circumstances such as the economy and public sentiments. Given proper flexibility, the date of the referendum could be postponed to a more favorable date. In addition, the recommendation of implementing a sales tax for a fraction of a penny may be more favorable to the public. Strategies to improve the general view of how the revenue will be spent must be implemented including increasing transparency and providing for “real” public involvement. Removing any controversial projects and only placing projects with specific descriptions might also be helpful. The strategy could be furthered by removing any transit projects with vague descriptions. However, many of the voters identifying with the economy would not vote in favor of the referendum regardless of strategies implemented given that this group is fundamentally against tax increases during a recession.

On a national level, the effects of the great recession can be seen in the overall percentage of approval for transportation measures. In 2004, the percentage of approval for transportation funding measures was 76 percent. In 2008, the number was 78 percent. However, by year 2010, the number decreased to 61 percent. In 2012, the percentage increased to 68 percent. Even areas that are typically supportive of sales tax initiatives ran into difficulties. For example, Los Angeles, California met a close defeat with Measure J, which would have extended a 30-year 0.5 percent sales tax initially passed in 2008 for another 30 years [30]. In California, the measure needs a supermajority of 66 percent to pass and only resulted in 65 percent. The results suggest that the overarching national issues played a large role in other measures around the same time as the Atlanta referendum.

4.9.2 The Anti-Tax Movement

Many voters developed anti-tax sentiments in reaction to the economic situation. As the economy continued to struggle, the Tea Party's message became increasingly popular in the state of Georgia. One main goal of the Tea Party movement was to solve the national debt crisis by adhering to the ideals of fiscal conservatism and reduced government interference; the movement resonated with the general public, though many did not identify specifically with the Tea Party. As the anti-tax sentiments increased, many Republican legislators and leaders signed "no tax" pledges upon taking office.

In 2010, many legislators remember the Tea Party not being as visible when compared to present day. The Tea Party became very prominent over the two year period between the passage of the bill and the voter referendum. One member of the legislature complained of the difficulties determining how many members of the public identified with the Tea Party. The legislator argued that leaders of the Tea Party are not elected, meaning there is no specific process which determines the reach of the movement in the Atlanta region and what constituency the leaders represent when they speak in public or are quoted by the media [1]. Even so, the media portrayed the loss of the referendum as a victory for the Tea Party. Most of those interviewed felt the media played a large role in their success, arguing that they Tea Party was given as much power as the campaign on media channels, a medium that many in the public received the majority of their information from during the campaign. Also, those interviewed argued that it was easy to run a campaign against a tax during a recession with the public sentiment and distrust in government was at such volatile levels.

Still, grass-roots campaigning by the Tea Party and other opponents pushed a message many in the public could agree with. As mentioned earlier, the public was struggling through the Great Recession and the slogan seen on all yard signs and flyers, "the largest tax increase in Georgia's history," caught the attention of many, sometimes likely being the first mention of the referendum. The anti-tax movement grew with the referendum and is likely to be a driving force in Georgia politics in the near future. Many believe the victory for the movement will provide more power for the movement in future state politics.

Lessons Learned

Following the beliefs of anti-tax sentiments, many would not vote for a tax increase, regardless of the purpose or proposed benefit. In a post-election survey, the second most popular response of respondents who voted against the referendum voted against the referendum because they “did not want more taxes” [91]. In the terms of combating the message, the issue is not necessarily the type of campaigning conducted by each campaign but more so the message of the two campaigns. Though the campaign should have devoted more of its funding toward grass-roots efforts, the argument is more directed toward marketing. The message presented by the Tea Party and other members of the opposition provided for a cohesive and marketable message to voters and the message presented by the proponents did not. For example, a recent campaign against a local option sales tax for the purpose of education funding recently passed in Cobb County. The passage is attributed to the strong message of educational funding which many in the county could agree upon. The message of educational funding prevailed over the anti-tax message, a message which was extremely prevalent in Cobb County during the July 31, 2012 referendum.

The opposition’s message could have been countered by a strategic move to publicly address all criticisms directed toward the campaign, project list, and legislation in an effort to reduce misinformation and public distrust in government and the process. Also, the recommendations mentioned earlier in this chapter such as providing for a cohesive, marketable transportation vision by offering a smaller project list in smaller regions could also be beneficial. Regardless, the strength and marketability of the anti-tax message played a large role in the failure of the referendum.

4.9.3 Distrust in Government Amid a Looming Presidential Election

The nation was struggling with the Great Recession and was growing tired of the status-quo. Many were angered by the government and its overall inability to “fix” the economy. The generally conservative state of Georgia was gearing up to voice its opinion in the presidential election in two months’ time. The public political awareness was at one of its highest points given the perceived importance of the presidential election on the national debt, the economy,

and healthcare, among other issues. Many believe this emotion caused many in the region to cast a vote in defiance of taxation and government interference, a characteristic normally contributed to President Barack Obama. Many argue that this emotion was directed at the national level but was felt at the local level in this referendum. The enormous amount of voters who turned out at the polls on a normally quiet primary suggested the underlying motivations of the voters.

A survey of Cobb and Atlanta voters after the referendum showed that 32 percent of the respondents who voted against the referendum voted against the referendum because the “did not trust the government to do a good job”, the most popular selection [91]. Overall, the public distrust in the national government to address the national debt and the economy was inflated in the state of Georgia. This distrust in government spanned all levels of government; there was disconnect between the federal and local levels. A legislator recalled “sensing the mood of the voters” as mix of “frustration, distrust, and fear” [1]. A member of the campaign mentioned that the public did not believe that the safeguards coded into the bill were going to happen. The public did not believe the safety nets imbedded into the legislation such as the 10-year period or the inclusion of only the projects on the list [26]. Large amounts of misinformation went unanswered and caused many not to trust the process. The public believed the tax would never end and the 10-year period was only a recommendation. The public believed the revenue would be misused. The vague descriptions in the project list called many transit projects into question and left many weary. Historical distrust in state agencies such as MARTA and GDOT in terms of their on-time and on-budget delivery as well as misuse of tax dollars fueled the sentiments. Controversial decisions surrounding the opening of the High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes on Interstate 85, and the broken campaign promise to end tolling on Georgia 400 also played a role in public distrust in local government to use taxpayers’ dollars wisely.

Lessons Learned

The proponents must give facts about on-time and on-budget delivery of GDOT and inform the public about the trustworthiness and transparency of the process. In addition, the

state of Georgia and leaders must continually work toward improving the public image of agencies by providing and educating about on-time and on-budget project delivery. Also, the legislature must address MARTA's funding crisis and public image.

4.10 Summary

Many factors were identified as contributors to the failure of the referendum. The legislation contained what many considered to be "fatal flaws." The project list contained "pet projects" and did not provide a cohesive transportation vision for the region. The campaign struggled to sell the project list and met a large and unique mix of opposition. The public perception of the legislation, project list, and campaign declined throughout the process for a multitude of reasons. The following were identified as contributing factors to the failure of the referendum:

- The lack of flexibility in the legislation and project selection process;
- The timing of the process and referendum date;
- The lack of long-term support from leadership;
- The lack of an "opt-out" criterion;
- The size and diversity of the Atlanta region;
- The size and composition of the project list;
- The lack of a cohesive transportation vision;
- The lack of agreement on the transportation vision between the legislation, criteria, project list, and campaign;
- Anti-transit sentiments and the negative public opinion of MARTA;
- The lack of "real" public involvement and input in the project list and process;
- The unusual level and mixture of opposition;
- The successful marketing strategy and grass-roots campaign by the opposition;
- The negative spending visibility of the official campaign;

- The timing and level of grass-roots efforts by the official campaign;
- The strong role of the media in promoting proponents and opponents.

However, the consensus among those interviewed was that not one of these issues caused the failure of the referendum. Instead, the referendum was significantly influenced by the following overarching national issues:

- The economy;
- The anti-tax movement;
- The looming presidential election;
- Distrust with all levels of government.

These were the driving force in a “perfect storm” of factors which led to the ultimate failure of the referendum on July 31, 2012. Lessons learned include the following:

- Allow more flexibility in the legislation and project selection process;
- Ensure that all members of the process understand the fundamental reasoning for the legislation through criteria or restrictions in the legislation;
- Depending on the politics of the region, determine if it is necessary to codify the criteria and project list into the legislation;
- Design process so that long-term support from legislators, local officials, and public is maximized;
- Address critical stakeholders early in the process;
- Establish a time period that matches the percentage of transit and roadway required;
- Build in additional time into the process so that on-time and on-budget delivery for transit projects is obtained;
- Minimize time between approval of the project list and the referendum;

- Place the date of the referendum on a date where a representative sample of voters is at the polls;
- Allow for an open-ended date for the referendum;
- Refrain from long-winded language with technical jargon and acronyms in the legislation;
- Create regions such that the areas share a similar transportation vision;
- Smaller regions are more likely to share a transportation vision and goal for regionalism;
- An “opt-out” criterion is necessary in a home-rule state similar to Georgia. If politically possible, do not allow an “opt-out” criterion. When necessary, an “opt-in” criterion is more favorable where the offer expires after a certain time period;
- Never use disincentives. When using incentives, the line between a disincentive and an incentive must be far enough apart to not be blurred;
- Allow for fractions of a penny sales tax implementation;
- Do not call out political issues in the legislation. Do not call out certain agencies in the legislation. Address the issue in another format;
- Address transit governance before allowing the flexibility to include transit projects on the project list;
- Ensure constitutionality of the legislation;
- Construct a project list with a small amount of projects with a cohesive transportation vision that is designed to later be marketable by the campaign;
- In an anti-transit region, create the first project list with only a few transit capital projects with construction ideally in the first six years of the sales tax. During the first referendum, attempt to minimize transit funding while choosing transit projects which will fund construction;

- Ensure that transit projects will be completed on-time and on-budget;
- Avoid placing controversial projects on the project list;
- Avoid placing “pet projects” and projects which are not “regional” in nature on the project list;
- Analyze the constituency to determine proper percentages of transit and roadway projects;
- Analyze the constituency to determine criterion percentages such as economic development and congestion mitigation;
- Allow for “real” public involvement and ensure strong levels of public involvement;
- Address concerns by the public quickly;
- Address concerns by the opposition prior to the approval of the project list;
- Address equity concerns and the concerns of influential communities in the region;
- Address public concerns about overall trust and the on-time and on-budget delivery of projects;
- Attempt an honest conversation with the public about congestion relief versus congestion management;
- Ensure long-term viability of the transportation funding initiative;
- Create a marketing strategy for the campaign which resonates with the public through a cohesive transportation vision;
- Respond to all complaints and criticisms by opposition;
- Avoid overselling the message;
- Minimize campaign presence to voters less likely to vote in favor of the referendum;
- Balance campaign spending toward more grass-roots efforts;

- Begin the campaign in time to address the public and counter opposition;
- Form strategies from sales tax campaigns on a local level in the state with support from other regional sales taxes across the nation. The success of other regions depends on the politics, rules, and constituencies unique to that region;
- Minimize noticeable campaign spending during an economic recession;

Other regions in the nation looking to attempt similar referenda can utilize the following recommendations:

1. Flexibility should be allowed in the legislation and process;
2. Ensure the project list criteria and composition matches public opinion and critical stakeholder opinions throughout the process;
3. The size of regions should be minimized to ensure a similar transportation vision for each region and resulting project list;
4. The size of the project list should be minimized. Project lists and criteria should match the transportation vision initially agreed upon and be maintained throughout the process;
5. The process timeline must be minimized to reduce opportunity for public criticism;
6. Public involvement should be conducted throughout the process and must match the results in the process and project list;
7. Key issues such as transit governance and public distrust in government must be addressed prior to passing a transportation funding initiative;
8. Regionalism begins with a common interest to work toward, such as a common transportation vision. Ideally, regions should be divided along similar transportation visions.

Chapter 5 addresses Atlanta moving forward by discussing alternative options for future funding initiatives as well as true possibilities taking into account the current political environment for transportation funding in the Atlanta region.

Chapter V

ATLANTA MOVING FORWARD

5.1 Transportation Crisis

Currently, the Atlanta region remains in a “transportation crisis.” According to the ARC, approximately \$13.2 billion in transportation investments will be made during the 2013 - 2022 period from traditional sources, assuming budgets are not cut. However, the ARC estimates that 70 percent of the funds will be spent maintaining the existing transportation system in the Atlanta region [6]. The region lacks resources for transportation investment and will experience increased congestion as the population continues to grow. Increased congestion will impact quality of life and business efficiency. Members of the business community fear the repercussions on future business relocation decisions in the region. Others worry that the young, talented professionals, a demographic that normally supports transit and walkable development, will relocate to more competitive regions that provide the lifestyle the youth typically prefer.

Given that many other metro areas around the nation have addressed their transportation crises, the competitiveness of the region has been called into question. Dallas, Denver, Phoenix, Charlotte, Minneapolis, Salt Lake City, and Seattle have all passed transportation referenda in the past few years and are currently investing in their respective transportation systems. Until a new transportation funding source is acquired, the Atlanta region will continue down a path of limited funding and increased congestion, losing businesses and talent to regions that are addressing their transportation issues.

5.2 Alternative Options

A positive aspect of the referendum many interviewees noted was that the process started a discussion on regionalism in transportation. The discussion might help spark new initiatives in coming years that will attempt to solve the transportation crisis. Local officials and legislators have learned from the process, as shown in chapter 4. If the discussion on

transportation investment is continued in a positive light, it is possible that the local officials and legislators can work together to design an initiative taking into account the flaws in the original process and legislation. Many in the region were not shocked or disheartened by the failure of the referendum. Failing the first time is common for similar referenda across the nation; trying again is normal. For example, Seattle, a region that normally favors transit and transportation funding, failed during the first initiative in 2007. According to a member of the business community, Seattle “failed, learned, elevated the issue, and came back and made some changes” [26]. The Seattle area passed their referendum 58 percent to 42 percent the following year [24]. Many believe that Atlanta is on the same path and will pass the next attempt.

Some members of the general public and opposition believed there would be another project list and referendum after the 24-month allotted time codified in the legislation; however, the political possibility of another vote similar to the process discussed in chapter 3 is slim to none. The majority of legislators believe the best possible scenario is to start with new legislation. However, politically, new legislation is at least four or five years from reality. One legislator even said “we should know better than trying this again” [3]. To some legislators, the issue is far down the list of important topics they will address over the next few years. When it is deemed politically feasible, a new initiative will likely be attempted. The following subsections discuss possible alternatives and additions that take into account lessons learned and that would likely produce a more favorable outcome in the Atlanta region. All alternatives require varying levels of compromise and leadership support.

5.2.1 Limited Geography

Regardless of the specifics of the legislation and process, one lesson from the referendum is that the size of the regions plays a large role in ensuring that each region shares a transportation vision; similar transportation visions can be transformed into a cohesive list of projects preferably with a few large projects that have the most impact. Following this line of thinking, limiting the geography of the region can increase the possibility of a favorable

outcome during a regional referendum. Over the past decade, the majority of regional attempts similar to the Atlanta region's initiative have included fewer than 10 counties. The largest attempt occurred in 2004 in Denver, Colorado where eight counties were included in the referendum for a 0.6 percent sales tax increase to fund transit improvements in the district. The district was 2,340 square miles and is currently home to 2.7 million people [71]. As mentioned earlier, the district has not been as successful with recent attempts to increase the sales tax to 1 percent due to negative public opinion. The district's successful 2004 initiative was one of the models the campaign and business community used to design and implement the Atlanta initiative. In comparison, the Atlanta region is 2,981 square miles and is currently home to 4.18 million people [6]. The Atlanta region, along with the majority of the regions in the state, was the largest attempt thus far in the recent history of regional sales tax initiatives in terms of both square mileage and population. The Atlanta region should design a future referendum with smaller regions having similar transportation visions.

5.2.2 A Cohesive Transportation Vision in the Atlanta Region

In a post-election survey, the third most popular response by respondents who voted against the referendum was that "the proposed initiative was not comprehensive/good enough" [91]. To increase the likelihood of approval, the region must have a cohesive transportation vision. The Atlanta region should be divided into two subregions. The inner counties (Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton and Gwinnett Counties) would form one subregion and the remaining outer counties (Cherokee, Douglas, Fayette, Henry, and Rockdale Counties) would form another. The two subregions would devise separate project lists and vote in separate referenda. The two subregions would share similar transportation visions. The inner counties would likely agree on transit investment similar to the list presented for the entire 10-county region. The outer counties would likely agree on continued GRTA funding, possibly a mobility call center, and intersection improvements throughout the subregion. The shared transportation vision would make a positive outcome more likely in the respective subregions.

The type of desired impact, that is, economic development or congestion mitigation,

must be determined based on the level of support for certain criteria in the subregions. The criteria must be maintained throughout the process to ensure a cohesive understanding of the project list and initiative. The legislation and process must be designed to ensure that the vision is maintained throughout the process as well as reflects public opinion in the region.

5.2.3 The “Opt-In” Criteria and Intergovernmental Agreements

The remaining 149 counties in the state of Georgia can be addressed in a separate manner. Given that many do not have a cohesive vision or similar needs, the counties can be given more flexibility. In counties outside of the Atlanta region, counties should be open to contract with any bordering county to form a region through an intergovernmental agreement, following an “opt-in” structure. The counties which comprise the respective region should be allowed a time period to “opt-in” to an agreement. If all counties of the region “opt-in,” the process would move forward. If not, the ability to “opt-in” again would be allowed after a specified time period had passed. A recommended time period would be annual or biennial. Using this alternative, a shorter time period of 10-years or less is preferred based on the possible change in transportation needs over a decade. The shorter time period could allow for greater political feasibility in choosing a list of projects that immediately meets the needs of the region. The alternative would also garner support from those in the legislature who required the initiative to focus on the entire state. The alternative both addresses the Atlanta transportation crisis while also allowing the remaining counties the ability to fund their transportation needs.

With this alternative, the ability of regions to implement a fraction of a penny could likely produce a more favorable outcome. The fraction of a penny could function as the base level of involvement. As an incentive for intergovernmental agreements and regionalism, the counties forming regions of more than two counties could increase their fraction of a penny to a whole penny sales tax.

Still, one member of the House says that they will probably not be “heading in that direction” because it defeats the purpose. The member argues that the legislature should

not only address the Atlanta region but the entire state as a whole [1]. Because of this view in the House, it will be difficult to reach a consensus on legislation relating to intergovernmental agreements. The legislation would need to address the entire state. Regardless, any of the recommendations in the alternative could be utilized to improve the outcome of future referenda in the Atlanta region.

5.2.4 The Fourth Penny

To counter the home-rule concern, the phase-in of the fourth penny of the general fund could be used, similar to proposals in prior legislative attempts. The fourth penny could be phased in to fund specific projects in the state of Georgia, which are identified as being of high priority. Currently, the other three pennies are guaranteed to GDOT and the fourth penny goes to the general budget. The proposal would allow the fourth penny to be directed from the general budget to transportation. The funding would not be large but would add up over time for certain important transportation projects. The projects could be selected by the GDOT director of planning, meaning the governor would likely be behind whatever project is selected. However, the fourth penny would free up additional funding for critical projects for the region and state. Given current political views toward transit investment and the MARTA public image, the projects would likely be roadway and intersection improvements. The addition could serve as a check for the state to ensure that the initiative did not just deal with Atlanta region, but the entire state. The fourth penny alternative could be an addition to the use of intergovernmental agreements to address the concerns of the home-rule legislature.

5.2.5 Addressing Transit Funding

Transit does not receive funding from the state. Currently, the state gas tax revenue is restricted from transit projects. Many interviewees are hopeful that state funding for MARTA is possible in the next decade. Others are not as hopeful, noting the history of contention between MARTA and the state legislature. Some argue that the fourth penny could instead be used to fund transit projects. The General Assembly by statute can pass a law that allows the fourth penny of the motor fuel tax to be an authority fee that would be collected by an

authority. Authority fees can be redirected by the general assembly to filter into the fund of the authority. The fees would not be subject to annual spending requirements, meaning it could “roll-over” from year-to-year [3]. One member of the House argues that \$180 million a year from the state for transit is a fair amount. After 10 years Georgia could build close to \$2 billion for transit. The funding could advance MARTA, fund portions of the expansion of MARTA lines, and allow some operations funding for commuter rail projects [3]. Still, the long-standing anti-transit sentiments of the state legislature make the alternative politically infeasible in the short-term.

Transit supporters in the region are hoping to revisit the MARTA Act of 1965. As mentioned in chapter 2, the General Assembly passed the MARTA Act of 1965 to allow a special referendum for the five county metropolitan area and the city of Atlanta to decide county-specific participation in the rapid transit authority. The MARTA Act allows the three counties (Clayton, Cobb, and Gwinnett Counties) that voted to “opt-out” of participation to join by approving a county-wide referendum. In 2010, there was a positive result from a non-binding referendum asking “Should Clayton County become a full participant in MARTA... and levy a sales tax in support of MARTA and Clayton County’s public transportation needs?” The Clayton County voters approved the non-binding referendum 67 to 33 percent [7]. This positive result makes many transit advocates hopeful for future expansion and improvement of MARTA in the next few decades.

One background incentive for the voters to approve such a measure stems from the elimination of the Clayton County bus service, C-TRAN. The service was discontinued in March of 2010, leaving many citizens stranded and raising questions on equity in the county. The project list for the transportation referendum included funding for Clayton County’s bus service. Regardless, the county voted 54 to 46 percent against the referendum. The failure of the referendum in the area suggests the lack of a cohesive transportation vision in the region. Clayton County had agreed overwhelmingly for increasing the sales tax by 1 percent two years prior to fund their bus system and future MARTA expansion in the county. Two years later, the county voted against a list that included the same transit service along with other helpful projects for the county such as GRTA, the regional mobility

center, and roadway improvements. The lack of agreement on the rest of the list was likely an important factor for the county.

After the failure of the referendum, many transit advocates were actively pushing for the inclusion of a binding referendum on the November ballot for Clayton County to officially join MARTA. They were on a deadline given that the expiration of the legislatively approved relaxation of the current cap on sales tax dollars was occurring in November 2012. The push met resistance from the Clayton County Commission and was never placed on the November ballot. Currently, the political feasibility of Clayton County joining MARTA is reduced given that the relaxation of the cap has expired and any addition in sales tax must replace one tax with another given that Clayton County is currently at its sales tax limit. Also, many believe the feasibility of the other two MARTA counties joining MARTA is far less than Clayton. As MARTA works to improve its image in the next decade, the political possibility of revisiting the MARTA Act may become more likely. However, this alternative is currently very unlikely.

Many initially believed that anti-transit sentiments and MARTA issues reduced the chance for transit investment in the region; however, current events show that the Atlanta region is slowly moving forward on transit investment. The Atlanta region is currently constructing the Atlanta Streetcar, opening in 2014. The Atlanta region Eastside and Westside tax allocation districts (TADs) recently approved the funding of environmental studies for streetcar lines similar to the lines proposed in the project list. The BeltLine project and additional transit investment is popular with citizens inside the city limits.

One legislator mentioned that the region needs “a little time right now to build the confidence in the public in GDOT’s ability...and to address the public’s opinion of MARTA.” [1]. The region must work on improving the public trust in government and transit investment so that the public will approve future transit funding for the region. The region must address current concerns on transit, including the low public opinion of MARTA and the MARTA funding crisis before additional transit investment will be supported by the public. In the meantime, transit funding without the branding of MARTA will likely be the most publicly favorable transit investments. Examples include the Atlanta Streetcar, the BeltLine, and

GRTA Xpress bus operations.

5.2.6 Addressing Transit Governance

Before any additional funding initiative is attempted, the transit governance model must be determined for the Atlanta region. Transit governance was attempted in the 2011 session and failed at the last moment. The legislature disagreed on the issue of representation. Many legislators supported a “weighted” transit governance model. The main disagreement among the members was whether to pass a “weighted” model or an “equal” model of transit governance [1]. The issue of power between the state and the city of Atlanta was again a resonating issue. Transit governance, regardless of the model, must be determined to ensure a functional and detailed project list. The vague descriptions and understanding of the governance of regional transit projects on the list inflated the issue of public distrust in government. The most expensive projects lacked important details. An ideal transit governance model would address the MARTA funding issues while re-branding MARTA in some fashion. The model would create a funding umbrella while also allowing for improved connectivity and smoother transitions among the agencies operating in the 10-county region.

5.2.7 The Project Selection Process and the Atlanta Regional Transportation Roundtable

Many of those interviewed praised the process laid out in the legislation for project selection. Many believed the RTR was an efficient way to address local transportation needs and select an agreeable project list. In many ways, the project list was a success. The project list was unanimously approved by a range of local officials with varying constituencies and transportation needs. The project list was “forward-thinking” with 52 percent transit, arguably too forward given the general anti-transit sentiments in the region. Though the process was successful, it failed to seriously take into account general public opinion on transit investment, economic development, and congestion mitigation. Another referendum should include a similar process with a few small changes. The process should be shortened to ensure public opinion does not shift between approval and the referendum. The process should involve “real” public involvement that directly impacts the project list. The public

involvement must be representative of the general public. The flaws within the project list and selection process created difficulties for the official campaign and should be countered by implementing strategies that ensure a project list with optimal levels of public approval.

5.2.8 The Campaign

The campaign was gifted many flaws from the legislation and project selection process that provided hurdles for proper campaign marketing strategies. Many of those interviewed believe that the campaign was given an impossible list to sell to the public. The public did not agree with economic development and the numbers on congestion mitigation were impossible to sell or explain to the public. With a more cohesive transportation vision and project list, the campaign could have designed a resonating marketing strategy. A successful campaign must have an honest discussion with the public on the importance of the referendum in terms of economic competitiveness; the campaign must sell job creation over congestion mitigation. Focusing on the referendum's potential impact on the economy might have garnered more support over the unsubstantial statistics following congestion mitigation. Also, a successful campaign must address all criticisms through large amounts of manpower and grass-roots efforts. The campaign spending must be weighted toward grass-roots campaigning, especially during a recession. Visibly excessive campaign spending must be avoided. Billboards and campaign advertisements did not resonate well in the region and possibly will not resonate well in regions with characteristically high levels of public distrust in government. One of the most successful portions of the campaign included the campaign's ability to fund-raise close to \$8 million dollars in campaign funding. Using the funding that was acquired in smaller, more discrete amounts would have had a more positive impact on the outcome of the referendum.

5.3 2013 Legislative Session

One member of the House addressed transportation funding in the 2013 session by saying "I just don't know that there is a need for it in this session" [1]. Following this sentiment, nothing surrounding transit, transit governance, or MARTA restructuring was passed in the 2013 legislative session. Transportation funding was generally not entertained by the

legislature. A few transportation-related bills made headlines in the media, but never were passed into law.

5.3.1 Transportation Bills

During the campaign, the complaints of some members of the legislature were followed by threats to address the matching requirements codified in the Transportation Investment Act of 2010. The members pushed to remove the matching requirements in the 2013 session through Senate Bill 73. The push fell on deaf ears in the legislature and never seriously moved forward, being read and referred in late January [29].

One member of the House stated that it was the legislature’s “responsibility to protect the taxpayers in Fulton and DeKalb County and ensure that we have a safety net in place that encourages the privatization and efficiencies in the system” [1]. The House made a strong push for privatization of MARTA in the 2013 legislative session with House Bill 264. The push was fueled by a controversial release of a 3rd party audit that recommended MARTA privatize certain functions to improve functionality. The bill introduced by the House in the 2013 session required a restructuring of the MARTA board that essentially gave more power to Republican mayors, a political trend that has been seen throughout the major issues mentioned in previous chapters. The bill also required that MARTA privatize many functions including technology support, human resources, and accounting, among others. The bill was stalled in the Senate due to lack of support [53]. Many in the Senate did not agree with the bill while pro-transit and labor union representatives vehemently opposed the bill. MARTA asked to be allowed the flexibility to privatize certain functions on their own time without being mandated. Members of the House were angered by the Senate’s inaction. The House reacted by adding some of the same portions of the stalled bill to Senate Bill 155; it was also unsuccessful [43]. The legislature did not pass a bill on privatization in the 2013 legislative session. The discussion will likely be continued during the 2014 session. Given the lack of MARTA legislation, the 50/50 restriction will be reinstated June 2013 perpetuating the MARTA funding crisis. Similarly, the funding issues of GRTA were also not addressed. Currently, GRTA has yet to acquire an additional funding source for the June 2013 funding

deadline.

House Bill 195 introduced an idea similar to the intergovernmental agreements alternative listed in this chapter. The bill failed given the lack of public will to approach a transportation funding initiative in the session [76]. After time passes and political will increases in the legislature, a similar bill might garner enough support to pass the legislature. Given the lack of transportation funding passed in the legislature, the region will continue to display characteristics of increased growth and congestion amid limited funding and infrastructure investment.

5.3.2 Other Politics

GA 400

Governor Deal kept his promise made a week before the referendum to remove tolls on GA 400. The tolls are currently set to be removed in November of 2013. The removal of the tolls is perceived by some as a political move. Regardless, though many in the public are happy to see the tolls removed, the removal has seemed to have had little effect on the overall public distrust in government. If anything, the political move negatively impacted the public distrust in government a week prior to the election.

The Falcons Stadium

The Atlanta Falcons organization has been pushing for a new football stadium for years. Recently, a proposal was brought to the public and the state legislature. The original plan was to ask the state legislature to approve the increase in the bonding cap from the \$200 million to \$300 million in the 2013 session to allow the hotel-motel tax to fund a portion of a new \$1 billion dollar Falcons stadium. The remaining \$700 million was to be funded by private sources. After a large public outcry, the state legislature passed the issue to the city of Atlanta. The public was angry about the possibility of replacing a relatively new stadium; the current stadium, which opened in 1992, was only 20 years old and would be demolished and transformed into a parking lot. On March 18, 2013, the Atlanta city council, along with the support of Mayor Kasim Reed, passed a resolution that extended the hotel-motel tax to 2050 to fund at least \$200 million toward the stadium. The remaining \$800 million would

be funded by private sources. The approval passed with continued outcry from the public.

The current stadium is set to be demolished and the new stadium will likely be built next door by 2017. The new stadium will include a retractable-roof with seating ranging from 66,000 to 80,000 people. The discussion occurred less than a year after the overwhelming defeat of the Atlanta referendum, a defeat which was attributed to the overall lack of public trust in government. The Falcons stadium was an attempt to keep the Falcons from moving to another city or to the suburbs, a threat made on several instances. However, the hotel-motel tax has now been utilized by the stadium and cannot be used to fund transit or transportation investment in the region. Many in the region believe the hotel-motel tax could be one possibility for dedicated transit investment or solving the MARTA funding crisis. The issue has had a perceived negative impact on public trust in government.

5.4 Summary

The Atlanta region is currently in a “transportation crisis.” Until another initiative is attempted, the region will remain on a path toward high congestion, low quality of life, and decreased competitiveness. The 2013 legislative session proved unsuccessful for transportation funding, transit governance, and transit funding. Other politics have become prominent in the region and have raised more concerns on public trust in government. The Atlanta region can implement the strategies and alternatives provided in chapter 4 and chapter 5 of this thesis during a future attempt at transportation funding to provide for a more favorable outcome. The regional sales tax will likely become a popular method for cities and regions looking to acquire additional funding sources as federal and state gas taxes continue to decrease. Regionalism is a significant issue that competitive cities and regions must address. Other regions in the nation looking to attempt future similar referenda can implement the strategies and alternatives provided to ultimately design a favorable piece of legislation, process, and outcome.

Appendix A

SAMPLE INTERVIEW GUIDES

The following pages include sample interview guides from different time periods throughout the interview process. Interview Guides are included for executive committee members, legislators, representatives from transportation agencies, representatives from the business community, transportation professionals, the official campaign, and prominent members of the opposition.

Interview Guide: Executive Committee – 1st Round Before Referendum

1. When and how did your involvement begin as part of the sales tax referendum?
2. Please describe the process (and the factors that came into play) for your appointment or election to the Roundtable Executive Committee?
3. The state has provided criteria that are to be used when selecting a project list. Which of these criteria are most important in your opinion? Are there other considerations that you will include when making a recommendation to the Full Roundtable?
4. To what extent have other individuals or organizations been involved in influencing the projects that the Roundtable will select (e.g., the Chamber of Commerce, advocacy groups, local transportation officials, etc.)? In your opinion, have some of these groups been more influential than others?
5. How is the Roundtable providing a “regional” perspective on the project selection process?
6. As of now, what chance do you give the sales tax of passing in your region and why?
7. If the sales tax passes in your region, what are the factors that you think might have contributed to its passage?
8. Similar to #7, if the sales tax does not pass in your region, what are the factors that you think might have contributed to it not passing?

Interview Guide: Executive Committee – 2nd Round Before Referendum

1. Can you go through your involvement with the project list during drafting, amendment, and approval? What issues were most prevalent?
2. Did any friction occur between the members of the Executive Committee? What was the most difficult discussion during the process?
3. Are you satisfied with the approved project list? For your area? For the region?
4. In your opinion, was the approval of the list “unanimous”?
5. Can you describe the amendments to the approved project list and how they affected the outcome?
6. What strategies did the Roundtable use to form a “regional” project list? What do you think could have been done to make the project list more “regional”?
7. How did the public hearings affect the final approved project list?
8. To what extent have other individuals and organizations been involved in influencing the projects that the Roundtable selected (e.g., the Chamber of Commerce, advocacy groups, local transportation officials, etc.)? In your opinion, have some of these groups been more influential than others?
9. As of now, what chance do you give the sales tax of passing and why?
10. What are the factors that you think might have contributed to its passing/not passing?
11. Which regions in the state do you see passing/not passing the referendum and why?

Interview Guide: Legislator Before Referendum

1. Can you describe your involvement with the Transportation Investment Act of 2010?
2. Can you describe your involvement with previous attempts at similar legislation? How would you describe the evolution of legislative efforts that culminated in TIA? Was TIA the result of numerous years of prior efforts? Or did it come about primarily on its own?
3. In your opinion, do you think it is possible for the state to increase the gas tax for transportation funding? Do you think it is politically possible for the state to amend the exclusivity for roads and bridges on the gas tax? What issues do you see holding back a potential increase of the gas tax?
4. Can you describe the reasoning behind the MARTA operations restrictions within the Transportation Investment Act of 2010?
5. Can you describe the reasoning behind the timing of the vote to be held on July 31st?
6. In the terms of MARTA's 50/50 restriction, what is your opinion on why the restriction has not been lifted?
7. I know there has been large opposition to the amount of transit funding on the project list for the Atlanta region. What is your position with respect to the level of transit investment in the Atlanta region's project list?
8. Recently, the Sierra Club has come out in opposition of the TSPLOST. The Sierra Club advocates instead for a primarily transit referendum. Given your experience and background, would enabling such a referendum pass the General Assembly?
9. If the TSPLOST does not pass, what will be the next move on the part of the state in providing additional transportation resources, if anything?
10. In your opinion, why did the transit governance legislation fail? Do you think failure to move any legislation will have an impact on the outcome of the TSPLOST in July?
11. If you could go back and change the Transportation Investment Act of 2010, what would you change and why?
12. If you could go back and change the project list, what would you change and why?
13. Did you attend any public hearings for the TSPLOST in the region?
14. As of now, what chance do you give the sales tax of passing and why in the Atlanta region? Other regions?
15. What are the factors that you think might have contributed to its passing/not passing?

Interview Guide: Legislator – After Referendum

1. Please describe your involvement with the referendum from previous attempts at legislation to its failure to pass on July 31st?
2. Did you expect the results of the referendum to be so far from projections? What factors led to the failure of the referendum?
3. What should be the next move for transportation finance in the Atlanta region?
4. What should be the next step by the Georgia Legislature? Have you heard of any discussions in the works?
5. Why is Atlanta in a “transportation crisis?” What are the factors that have contributed to this politically? Socially?
6. What is your opinion on the level of transit on the Atlanta region’s project list?
7. Do you believe the public opposition of the Sierra Club was influential? The Tea Party? The NAACP? Was this combination of opposition surprising?
8. What is your opinion of the effectiveness of the “yes” campaign? The “no” campaign?
9. In your opinion, what is the reasoning behind anti-rail sentiments in this region? Anti-tax sentiments? Distrust in government?
10. After the vote failed, the Governor mentioned MARTA’s reputation as being one factor for failure. Do you believe this was a factor?
11. What was the reasoning behind the MARTA operations restrictions within the Transportation Investment Act of 2010? In terms of MARTA’s 50/50 restriction, what is your opinion on why the restriction has not been lifted?
12. Many are hopeful to see a smaller scale transit referendum in the near future for a smaller Atlanta region (3 or 5 core counties). Would enabling such a referendum pass the Georgia General Assembly? If so, would it pass in the proposed area?
13. Many argue that Seattle is a good example for Atlanta to follow. In your opinion, what is the best way to go about providing successful passage of a primarily transit referendum given Atlanta’s political environment? Do you believe this is politically possible?
14. Do you think failure to move any transit governance legislation played a role in the failure of the referendum? Do you see transit governance legislation moving in the legislature soon? If so, what form do you see it taking? What would be your ideal transit governance model for this region?
15. What was the reasoning for the timing of the vote? Do you believe the timing of the vote played a role in the failure of the referendum?
16. If you could go back and change the Transportation Investment Act of 2010, and the process it initiated, what would you change and why?
17. What is your response to the current criticisms of the matching fees imposed on the failed regions within the bill?

Interview Guide: Transportation Agency - Before Referendum

1. What role did MARTA play (if any) in prioritizing the Atlanta regional projects for TIA? For MARTA, what were the most important variables for project selection? For the region (if different)?
2. Was there ever an issue where the interest of the counties, City of Atlanta and the region conflicted during the project selection process?
3. Are you satisfied with the approved and amended project list? Who “won” in terms of the projects selected? Who “lost?” If you could go back and change the project list, what would you change and why?
4. What was the reasoning behind the MARTA operations restrictions within the Transportation Investment Act of 2010? In the terms of MARTA’s 50/50 restriction, what is your opinion on why the restriction has not been lifted?
5. The Sierra Club opposes the referendum and advocates instead for a primarily transit referendum. Given your experience and background, would enabling such a referendum pass the General Assembly?
6. Why did the transit governance legislation fail? Do you think failure to move any legislation will have an impact on the outcome of the TSPLOST in July?
7. What was the reasoning behind the timing of the vote to be held on July 31st?
8. How successful has the TSPLOST campaign effort been?
9. As of now, what chance do you give the sales tax of passing and why? Given your experience, if the TSPLOST does not pass, what will be the next move on the part of the state in providing additional transportation resources, if anything?
10. What are the factors that you think might contribute to its passing/not passing?
11. What is your opinion on the claims that the Transportation Investment Act of 2010 is unconstitutional?
12. If you could go back and change the Transportation Investment Act of 2010, what would you change and why?
13. Why does commuter rail have such large opposition in the Atlanta region?
14. Do you think it is possible for the state to increase the gas tax for transportation funding? Do you think it is politically possible for the state to amend the exclusivity for roads and bridges on the gas tax? What issues do you see holding back a potential increase of the gas tax?

Interview Guide: Business Community – After Referendum

1. Why is Atlanta in a “transportation crisis?” What are the factors that have contributed to this politically? Socially?
2. When did the business community initially get involved in Georgia’s transportation funding crisis? Can you give me a timeline of their involvement to the present?
3. Did you expect the results of the referendum to be so far from projections? What factors led to the failure of the referendum?
4. If you could go back and change the Transportation Investment Act of 2010, and the process it initiated, what would you change and why?
5. If you could go back and change the Atlanta region’s project list, what would you change and why?
6. If you could go back and change the campaign in the Atlanta region, what changes would you make and why?
7. Do you believe the public opposition of the Sierra Club was influential? The Tea Party? The NAACP? Was this combination of opposition surprising?
8. What should be the next move for transportation finance in the Atlanta region?
9. What should be the next step by the Georgia Legislature? Have you heard of any discussions in the works? Realistically, what do you see happening in the upcoming legislative session?
10. In your opinion, what is the reasoning behind anti-rail sentiments in this region? Anti-tax sentiments? Distrust in government?
11. What is your opinion on the level of transit on the Atlanta region’s project list?
12. What was the reasoning behind the MARTA operations restrictions within the Transportation Investment Act of 2010? In terms of MARTA’s 50/50 restriction, what is your opinion on why the restriction has not been lifted?

Interview Guide: Transportation Professional/Speaker – After Referendum

1. Can you describe your involvement with the referendum from the previous attempts at legislation to its failure to pass on July 31st?
2. In your opinion, what factors led to the failure of the referendum? Was there one that played a more significant role than others?
3. What kind of repercussions do you see happening due to the failure of the referendum in the next few months? Years? Decades?
4. What should be the next move on the part of Atlanta so that it does not get “lapped” assuming that the region will do more than simply adopt the Governor’s approach (that is, Plan B)? What do you think of Governor Deal’s Plan B? What are the implications of this approach to the Atlanta region?
5. What is your opinion on the effectiveness of the “yes” campaign? The “no” campaign?
6. In your opinion, what is the reasoning behind anti-rail sentiments in this region? Anti-tax sentiments? Distrust in government?
7. What was the reasoning behind the MARTA operations restrictions within the Transportation Investment Act of 2010? In the terms of MARTA’s 50/50 restriction, what is your opinion on why the restriction has not been lifted?
8. The Sierra Club opposed the referendum and advocated instead for a primarily transit referendum. Would enabling such a referendum pass the Georgia General Assembly?
9. Do you think failure to move any transit governance legislation played a role in the failure of the referendum? Do you see transit governance moving in the legislature soon? If so, what form do you see it taking? What would be your ideal transit governance model for this region?
10. Do you believe the timing of the vote played a role in the failure of the referendum? In your opinion, what was the reasoning for the timing of the vote?
11. If you could go back and change the Transportation Investment Act of 2010, and the process it initiated, what would you change and why?
12. Do you think it is possible for the state to increase the gas tax for transportation funding? Do you think it is politically possible for the state to amend the exclusivity for roads and bridges on the gas tax? What issues do you see holding back a potential increase of the gas tax?
13. In your opinion, would commuter rail be a viable option for future transit investment endeavors in the region?
14. What is your opinion on the Millennials and the role they played during the referendum?
15. Why hasn’t Atlanta invested in transportation over the past decade? What are the factors that have contributed to this politically? Socially?
16. What is your advice to the region now that the referendum has failed?

Interview Guide: Campaign – Before Referendum

1. Can you go through the decision making process as the campaign was formed? Which prior campaigns did you look to emulate?
2. Has the strategy of the campaign changed from the formation of the campaign to now?
3. As we near July 31st, do you feel the campaign has been successful?
4. Can you discuss the funding mechanisms for the campaign?
5. Based on your heavy background in the business community, how influential do you feel the business community has been with the referendum throughout the entire process?
6. What specific entities have been the campaigns most influential source of verbal support? Financial support?
7. What specific entities have been the most influential source of verbal opposition? How is the campaign countering their opposition?
8. Why did the campaign wait until a few months before to begin campaigning?
9. How did you make the determination to focus on the suburban communities compared to the urban areas (all ads based on congestion)?
10. Did you attend any public hearings in the region? If so, do you believe the overall consensus has changed from your attendance until now?
11. What is the campaign's response to the constitutionality of the legislation? If there is an issue of constitutionality and the bill is ruled unconstitutional, what types of consequences do you foresee? Given your background, what affect would it have on the business community?
12. If you could go back and change the project list, what would you change and why?
13. If you could go back and change the Transportation Investment Act of 2010, what would you change and why?
14. As of now, what chance do you give the sales tax of passing in Atlanta and why? In the other 11 regions?
15. What are the factors that you think might have contributed to its passing/not passing?

Interview Guide: Opposition – Before Referendum

1. Can you describe your involvement with the Transportation Investment Act of 2010?
2. Can you briefly describe your background with the Georgia Tea Party and the Transportation Leadership Coalition?
3. It has been argued that Atlanta needs transportation investment in order to remain economically viable for businesses. What is your opinion on the level of need Atlanta faces?
4. I know there has been large opposition to the amount of transit funding on the project list for the Atlanta region. What is your position with respect to the level of transit investment in the Atlanta region's project list?
5. What would be your ideal Plan B? What would be the timeframe?
6. In your opinion, do you think it is possible for the state to increase the gas tax for transportation funding? Do you think it is politically possible for the state to amend the exclusivity for roads and bridges on the gas tax? What issues do you see holding back a potential increase of the gas tax?
7. Recently, the Sierra Club has come out in opposition of the TSPLOST. The Sierra Club advocates instead for a primarily transit referendum. Would you support a primarily transit referendum?
8. If the TSPLOST does not pass, what should be the next move on the part of the state in providing additional transportation resources?
9. If you could go back and change the Transportation Investment Act of 2010, what would you change and why?
10. Did you attend any public hearings for the TSPLOST in the region? Before the formation of the project list? During? After? In your opinion, did the public hearings influence the outcome of the project list?
11. If you could go back and change the project list, what would you change and why?
12. As of now, what chance do you give the sales tax of passing and why in the Atlanta region? Other regions?
13. What are the factors that you think might have contributed to its passing/not passing?

Appendix B

HOUSE BILL 277 OF 2010

The following list summarizes the specifics of House Bill 277 of 2010:

- Specific responsibilities of the commissioner of GDOT;
- Creation of the GDOT director of planning, appointed by the governor and approved by majority of House and Senate Transportation Committee;
- Specific responsibilities of the director of planning of GDOT;
- Suspension of the MARTA 50/50 restriction for three years;
- Change in membership of the MARTA board of directors;
- Allow expansion of MARTA to Gwinnett, Clayton, and Cobb Counties by approval of public referendum;
- Creation of the Georgia Coordinating Committee for Rural and Human Services Transportation of the Governor's Development Council;
- Sales tax exemption for jet fuel for qualifying airlines at qualifying airports, fuel used for off-road heavy-duty equipment (farm, agricultural, or locomotive), fuel used for propulsion of licensed public highway motor vehicles, fuel used for public mass transit, and the sale or lease of motor vehicles (only taxed on the first \$5000);
- Creation of 12 special tax districts corresponding to the boundaries of existing regional commissions;
- Special district sales tax subject to the requirement of referendum approval;
- Sales tax shall be imposed within the special district for a period of 10 years;
- Any tax shall be at a rate of one percent;

- The current cap on local sales and use taxes will be removed for the purpose of the one percent sales tax;
- Limiting the establishment of a fund or funds which would provide 20 or more years of maintenance and operations costs from the proceeds of the sales tax that would be used to “construct, finance, or otherwise develop transit capital projects”;
- MARTA shall not be authorized to use proceeds of the sales tax for maintenance and operations costs of existing infrastructure;
- Regional transportation roundtable for each special district consisting of two representatives from each county (one chairperson, sole commissioner, mayor or CEO of the county governing authority and one mayor elected by the mayors);
- Counties with more than 90 percent of the population residing in municipal corporations shall have the mayor serve as an additional representative (this only applied to Atlanta);
- The regional transportation roundtable shall elect five representatives to serve as an executive committee with non-voting members of the House and Senate (two from the House and one from the Senate);
- Before November 10, 2010, mayors of each county shall elect a mayoral representative for the regional transportation roundtable;
- The GDOT director of planning shall write the state recommended criteria for the investment list of transportation projects, recommended to include “performance goals, allocation of investment in alignment with performance, and execution of projects” by November 15, 2010;
- The state fiscal economist shall develop an estimate, including growth, of sales tax proceeds which shall be used for recommended criteria;
- Comments on criteria from local governments or MPOs shall be made no later than September 30, 2010;

- Any amendment or approval of criteria shall be enacted by a majority vote of present members of the regional transportation roundtable;
- After approval of criteria, a report shall be provided to local governments, MPOs, local legislators, and the GDOT commissioner;
- Upon receipt of the report, the parties shall submit projects to the GDOT director of planning;
- The GDOT director of planning shall “assemble a list of example investments” for each district’s investment criteria which is not required to be fiscally constrained within the budget and submit the list to each executive committee for consideration;
- A fiscally constrained draft list shall be developed and delivered by the executive committee and GDOT director of planning by August 15, 2011;
- The GDOT director of planning must provide a statement of public benefit for each project such as “congestion mitigation, increased lane capacity, public safety, and economic development”;
- The draft investment list shall be considered by the regional transportation roundtable and approved by a majority of present members;
- At least two public meetings must be held prior to the final regional transportation roundtable meeting;
- Comments from local governments, MPOs, and local legislators are permitted two weeks prior to the final meeting;
- Should the roundtable reject the list, amendments may be made on the list, requiring majority vote;
- Should the roundtable fail to approve an investment list, the district shall be in gridlock and will not hold an election until 24 months has passed. The gridlock district will also be required to provide 50 percent match for GDOT local maintenance and improvement grants until an election is held;

- The final investment list shall be delivered by October 15, 2011;
- The first election shall be held on the general statewide primary in 2012;
- The exact wording of the ballot question for each district;
- If one-half of the votes in the entire special district vote in favor, then the tax shall be levied and the local governments shall provide 10 percent match for GDOT local maintenance and improvement grants for the duration of the sales tax. If not, the election shall not be repeated for 24 months after the month of the election and the local governments shall provide a 30 percent match for GDOT local maintenance and improvement grants until the tax is approved;
- The approval of the tax shall not diminish alternative funds allocated to the district;
- Collection of the tax shall begin on the first day of the next quarter;
- The tax shall cease either on the final day of the 10-year period or at the point the collections equals the estimated amount to be raised;
- In the event of expiration of the tax or rejection of the tax, elections may be held on the statewide general primary;
- The commission shall contract with GDOT for all projects with the exception of bus and rail mass transit systems in which the commission will contract with GRTA;
- A yearly independent audit shall be completed on each district and a nontechnical report shall be annually published no later than December 15 of each year;
- 25 percent of the proceeds shall go to local governments within the district which the tax is levied. 15 percent of the proceeds shall go to local governments wholly contained within a single MPO (this only applied to Atlanta). The percentages shall be continually allocated to each local government by multiplying the Local Assistance Road Program (LARP) factor for each local government by the total amount of funds;

- If excess proceeds are collected those proceeds shall be distributed among the local governments in the district;
- A Citizen Review Panel shall be created for each district which votes in favor of the tax. The panel will be composed of three citizens of the district appointed by the Speaker of the House and two citizens of the district appointed by the lieutenant governor. The panel shall meet at least three days each year and be “charged with review of the administration of the projects and programs included on the approved investment list”;
- The tax shall not be subject to balancing;
- The creation of a Transit Governance Study Commission to address future legislation for transit governance.

The following pages include House Bill 277 as passed.

House Bill 277 (AS PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE)

By: Representatives Smith of the 129th, Harbin of the 118th, Sheldon of the 105th, Burkhalter of the 50th, Shaw of the 176th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To enact the "Transportation Investment Act of 2010"; to provide for a short title; to amend
2 Title 32 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to highways, bridges, and ferries,
3 so as to provide for certain powers and duties of the Department of Transportation; to
4 provide for certain responsibilities of the commissioner of transportation; to provide for
5 certain responsibilities of the director of planning; to suspend restrictions on the use by
6 public transit authorities of local sales and use tax proceeds; to change the membership of
7 the board of directors of the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority; to provide for a
8 Georgia Coordinating Committee for Rural and Human Services Transportation; to amend
9 Title 48 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to revenue and taxation, so as
10 to provide for legislative findings and intent; to provide for the creation of special districts;
11 to provide for a special district transportation sales and use tax in such special districts; to
12 provide for definitions; to provide for an exemption from the cap on the imposition of local
13 sales and use taxes; to provide for the development of an investment list of projects; to
14 provide for a referendum; to provide for the rate and manner of imposition of such tax; to
15 provide for collection and administration of such tax; to provide for use of the proceeds of
16 such tax; to provide for returns; to provide for distribution and expenditure of proceeds; to
17 provide for annual reporting; to provide for regional Citizens Review Panels; to provide for
18 tax credits; to provide for certain exemptions; to provide for the effect on any local sales and
19 use taxes; to provide for judicial actions; to amend Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia
20 Annotated, relating to state government, so as to provide for the creation of the Transit
21 Governance Study Commission; to provide for related matters; to provide for effective dates;
22 to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

23 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

24 **SECTION 1.**

25 This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Transportation Investment Act of 2010."

H. B. 277

- 1 -

26 **SECTION 1.1.**

27 Title 32 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to highways, bridges, and ferries,
28 is amended by revising subsection (a) of Code Section 32-2-41, relating to the powers and
29 duties of the commissioner of transportation, as follows:

30 "(a) As the chief executive officer of the department, the commissioner shall have direct
31 and full control of the department. He or she shall possess, exercise, and perform all the
32 duties, powers, and authority which may be vested in the department by law, except those
33 duties, powers, and authority which are expressly reserved by law to the board or the
34 director of planning. The commissioner's principal responsibility shall be the faithful
35 implementation of transportation plans produced by the director of planning and approved
36 by the Governor and the State Transportation Board, subject to the terms of such
37 appropriations Acts as may be adopted from time to time. The commissioner shall also be
38 responsible for the duties and activities assigned to the commissioner in Article 5 of
39 Chapter 8 of Title 48. When the board is not in regular or called session, the commissioner
40 shall perform, exercise, and possess all duties, powers, and authority of the board except:

- 41 (1) Approval of the advertising of nonnegotiated construction contracts; and
42 (2) Approval of authority lease agreements.

43 The commissioner shall also have the authority to exercise the power of eminent domain
44 and to execute all contracts, authority lease agreements, and all other functions except those
45 that cannot legally be delegated to him or her by the board."

46 **SECTION 2.**

47 Said title is further amended by revising Code Section 32-2-43, relating to the responsibilities
48 of the director of planning, as follows:

49 "32-2-43.

50 (a) There shall be a director of planning appointed by the Governor subject to approval by
51 a majority vote of both the House Transportation Committee and the Senate Transportation
52 Committee. The director shall serve during the term of the Governor by whom he or she
53 is appointed and at the pleasure of the Governor. Before assuming the duties of his or her
54 office, the director shall qualify by giving bond with a corporate surety licensed to do
55 business in this state, such bond to be in the amount of \$500,000.00 and payable to the
56 Governor and his or her successors in office. The bond shall be subject to the approval of
57 the Governor and shall be conditioned on the faithful discharge of the duties of the office.
58 The premium for the bond shall be paid out of the funds of the department.

59 (b) The director of planning's principal responsibility shall be the development of
60 transportation plans, including the development of the state-wide strategic transportation
61 plan and state-wide transportation improvement program and other comprehensive plans

62 pursuant to the provisions of Code Section 32-2-3 and Code Section 32-2-22, strategic
63 transportation plans pursuant to the provisions of Code Section 32-2-41.1, and benchmarks
64 and value engineering studies pursuant to the provisions of Code Section 32-2-41.2, in
65 consultation with the board, the Governor, and the commissioner. The director shall also
66 be responsible for the duties and activities assigned to the director in Article 5 of Chapter
67 8 of Title 48. The director shall be the director of the Planning Division of the department
68 and shall possess, exercise, and perform all the duties, powers, and authority which may
69 be vested in such division by law and are necessary or appropriate for such purpose, except
70 those duties, powers, and authority which are expressly reserved by law to the board or the
71 commissioner."

72 **SECTION 3.**

73 Said title is further amended by adding new Code sections immediately following Code
74 Section 32-9-12 to read as follows:

75 "32-9-13.

76 Provisions in all laws, whether general or local, including but not limited to the
77 Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority Act of 1965 approved March 10, 1965 (Ga.
78 L. 1965, p. 2243), as amended, that set forth restrictions on the use by public transit
79 authorities of annual proceeds from local sales and use taxes shall be suspended for the
80 period beginning on the effective date of this Code section and continuing for three years.
81 The greater discretion over such funds shall not abrogate the obligation of the public transit
82 authority to comply with federal and state safety regulations and guidelines. Newly
83 unrestricted funds shall be utilized, subject to total funding, to maintain the level of service
84 for the transit system as it existed on January 1, 2010. Furthermore, except as had been
85 previously contracted to by the public transit authority prior to January 1, 2010, no funds
86 newly unrestricted during this suspended period shall be used by a public transit authority
87 to benefit any person or other entity for any of the following: annual cost-of-living or merit
88 based salary raises or increases in hourly wages; increased overtime due to such wage
89 increases; payment of bonuses; or to increase the level of benefits of any kind.

90 32-9-14.

91 (a) Any provisions to the contrary in the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority Act
92 of 1965, approved March 10, 1965 (Ga. L. 1965, p. 2243), as amended, notwithstanding,
93 the terms of all members of the board of directors of the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid
94 Transit Authority shall terminate on December 31, 2010, and the board shall be
95 reconstituted according to the provisions of this Code section.

96 (b) Effective January 1, 2011, the board of directors of the authority shall be composed of
97 11 voting members and one nonvoting member. Of the voting members: three members
98 shall be residents of the City of Atlanta to be nominated by the mayor and elected by the
99 city council; four members shall be residents of DeKalb County to be appointed by the
100 DeKalb County Board of Commissioners and at least one of such appointees shall be a
101 resident of that portion of DeKalb County lying south of the southernmost corporate
102 boundaries of the City of Decatur and at least one of such appointees shall be a resident of
103 that portion of DeKalb County lying north of the southernmost corporate boundaries of the
104 City of Decatur; three members shall be residents of Fulton County to be appointed by the
105 local governing body thereof, and one of such appointees shall be a resident of that portion
106 of Fulton County lying south of the corporate limits of the City of Atlanta and two of such
107 appointees shall be residents of that portion of Fulton County lying north of the corporate
108 limits of the City of Atlanta. The commissioner of transportation shall be a voting member
109 of the board and the executive director of the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority
110 shall be a nonvoting member of the board. The governing body that appoints a member
111 shall appoint successors thereto for terms of office of four years in the same manner that
112 such governing body makes its other appointments to the board.
113 (c) All appointments shall be for terms of four years except that a vacancy caused
114 otherwise than by expiration of term shall be filled for the unexpired portion thereof by the
115 local governing body that made the original appointment to the vacant position, or its
116 successor in office. A member of the board may be appointed to succeed himself or herself
117 for one four-year term. Appointments to fill expiring terms shall be made by the local
118 governing body prior to the expiration of the term, but such appointments shall not be made
119 more than 30 days prior to the expiration of the term. Members appointed to the board
120 shall serve for the terms of office specified in this Code section and until their respective
121 successors are appointed and qualified.
122 (d) The local governing bodies of Clayton, Cobb, and Gwinnett Counties may, any other
123 provision of this Code section to the contrary notwithstanding, negotiate, enter into, and
124 submit to the qualified voters of their respective counties the question of approval of a
125 rapid transit contract between the county submitting the question and the authority. The
126 local governing bodies of these counties shall be authorized to execute such rapid transit
127 contracts prior to the holding of a referendum provided for in Section 24 of the
128 Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority Act of 1965, approved March 10, 1965 (Ga.
129 L. 1965, p. 2243), as amended; provided, however, that any such rapid transit contract shall
130 not become valid and binding unless the same is approved by a majority of those voting in
131 said referendum, which approval shall also be deemed approval of further participation in
132 the authority. Upon approval of such rapid transit contract, the county entering into such

133 contract shall be a participant in the authority, and its rights and responsibilities shall,
134 insofar as possible, be the same as those belonging to Fulton and DeKalb Counties, and the
135 local governing body of the county may then appoint two residents of the county to the
136 board of directors of the authority, to serve a term ending on the thirty-first day of
137 December in the fourth full year after the year in which the referendum approving said
138 rapid transit contract was held, in which event the board of directors of the authority shall,
139 be composed also of such additional members.
140 (e) No person shall be appointed as a member of the board who holds any other public
141 office or public employment except an office in the reserves of the armed forces of the
142 United States or the National Guard; any member who accepts or enters upon any other
143 public office or public employment shall be disqualified thereby to serve as a member.
144 (f) A local governing body may remove any member of the board appointed by it for
145 cause. No member shall be thus removed unless the member has been given a copy of the
146 allegations against him or her and an opportunity to be publicly heard in his or her own
147 defense in person with or by counsel with at least ten days' written notice to the member.
148 A member thus removed from office shall have the right to a judicial review of the
149 member's removal by an appeal to the superior court of the county of the local governing
150 body which appointed the member, but only on the ground of error of law or abuse of
151 discretion. In case of abandonment of the member's office, conviction of a crime involving
152 moral turpitude or a plea of nolo contendere thereto, removal from office, or
153 disqualification under subsection (e) of this Code section, the office of a member shall be
154 vacant upon the declaration of the board. A member shall be deemed to have abandoned
155 the member's office upon failure to attend any regular or special meeting of the board for
156 a period of four months without excuse approved by a resolution of the board, or upon
157 removal of the member's residence from the territory of the local governing body that
158 appointed the member.
159 (g) Each appointed member of the board, except the chairperson, shall be paid by the
160 authority a per diem allowance, in an amount equal to that provided by Code Section
161 45-7-21 for each day on which that member attends an official meeting of the board, of any
162 committee of the board, or of the authority's Pension Committee, Board of Ethics, or Arts
163 Council; provided, however, that said per diem allowance shall not be paid to any such
164 member for more than 130 days in any one calendar year. If the chairperson of the board
165 is an appointed member of the board, the chairperson shall be paid by the authority a per
166 diem allowance in the same amount for each day in which the chairperson engages in
167 official business of the authority, including but not limited to, attendance of any of the
168 aforsaid meetings. A member of the board shall also be reimbursed for actual expenses

169 incurred by that member in the performance of that member's duties as authorized by the
170 board. A board member shall not be allowed employee benefits.

171 (h) The board shall elect one of its members as chairperson and another as vice
172 chairperson for terms to expire on December 31 of each year to preside at meetings and
173 perform such other duties as the board may prescribe. The presiding officer of the board
174 may continue to vote as any other member, notwithstanding the member's duties as
175 presiding officer, if the member so desires. The board shall also elect from its membership
176 a secretary and a treasurer who shall serve terms expiring on December 31 of each year.
177 A member of the board may hold only one office on the board at any one time.

178 (i) The board shall hold at least one meeting each month. The secretary of the board shall
179 give written notice to each member of the board at least two days prior to any called
180 meeting that may be scheduled, and said secretary shall be informed of the call of such
181 meeting sufficiently in advance so as to provide for the giving of notice as above. A
182 majority of the total membership of the board, as it may exist at the time, shall constitute
183 a quorum. On any question presented, the number of members present shall be recorded.
184 By affirmative vote of a majority of the members present, the board may exercise all the
185 powers and perform all the duties of the board, except as otherwise hereinafter provided
186 or as limited by its bylaws, and no vacancy on the original membership of the board, or
187 thereafter, shall impair the power of the board to act. All meetings of the board, its
188 executive committee, or any committee appointed by the board shall be subject to Chapter
189 14 of Title 50.

190 (j) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Code section, the following actions by the
191 board shall require the affirmative vote of one more than a majority of the total
192 membership of the board as it may exist at the time:

193 (1) The issuance and sale of revenue bonds or equipment trust certificates;

194 (2) The purchase or lease of any privately owned system of transportation of passengers
195 for hire in its entirety, or any substantial part thereof. Prior to the purchase or lease of
196 any such privately owned system a public hearing pertaining thereto shall have been held
197 and notice of such public hearing shall have been advertised; provided, however, that no
198 sum shall be paid for such privately owned system of transportation in excess of the fair
199 market value thereof determined by a minimum of two appraisers qualified to appraise
200 privately owned systems of transportation and approved by a majority of the local
201 governments participating in the financing of such purchase;

202 (3) The award of any contract involving \$100,000.00 or more for construction,
203 alterations, supplies, equipment, repairs, maintenance, or services other than professional
204 services or for the purchase, sale, or lease of any property. The board by appropriate

205 resolution may delegate to the general manager the general or specific authority to enter
206 into contracts involving less than \$100,000.00;
207 (4) The grant of any concession; and
208 (5) The award of any contract for the management of any authority owned property or
209 facility.
210 (k) The board shall appoint and employ, as needed, a general manager and a general
211 counsel, none of whom may be members of the board or a relative of a member of the
212 board, and delegate to them such authority as it may deem appropriate. It may make such
213 bylaws or rules and regulations as it may deem appropriate for its own government, not
214 inconsistent with this Code section, including the establishment of an executive committee
215 to exercise such authority as its bylaws may prescribe.
216 (l) The treasurer of the authority and such other members of the board and such other
217 officers and employees of the authority as the board may determine shall execute corporate
218 surety bonds, conditioned upon the faithful performance of their respective duties. A
219 blanket form of surety bond may be used for this purpose. Neither the obligation of the
220 principal or the surety shall extend to any loss sustained by the insolvency, failure, or
221 closing of any depository which has been approved as a depository for public funds.
222 (m)(1) In addition to the requirements of subsection (i) of this Code section, each
223 member of the board shall hold a meeting once each 12 months with the local governing
224 body that appointed such member. The secretary of the board shall give written notice
225 to each member of the board, to each local governing body, and to the governing
226 authority of each municipality in the county in which there is an existing or proposed rail
227 line at least two days prior to any meeting that may be scheduled, and said secretary shall
228 be informed of the call of such meeting sufficiently in advance so as to provide for giving
229 such notice. These meetings shall be for the purpose of reporting to the local governing
230 bodies on the operations of the authority and on the activities of the board and making
231 such information available to the general public. No activity that requires action by the
232 board shall be initiated or undertaken at any meeting conducted under this subsection.
233 (2) The board shall submit once each three months a written report on the operations of
234 the authority and on the activities of the board to each local governing body that appoints
235 a member of the board."

236 **SECTION 4.**

237 Said title is further amended by adding a new chapter to read as follows:

238 "CHAPTER 12239 32-12-1.

240 The General Assembly finds that there exist a number of programs designed to provide
241 rural and human services transportation and that frequently these services are provided over
242 large geographic areas through various funding sources which are frequently targeted to
243 narrowly defined client bases. The sheer number of such programs lends itself to a need
244 for coordination among the programs and agencies which implement them so as to best
245 assist economies in purchasing equipment and operating these many programs, to better
246 serve the taxpayers of the state in ensuring the most cost-effective delivery of these
247 services, and to best serve the clients utilizing the transportation services provided through
248 these programs.

249 32-12-2.

250 There is created the Georgia Coordinating Committee for Rural and Human Services
251 Transportation of the Governor's Development Council.

252 32-12-3.

253 The Georgia Coordinating Committee for Rural and Human Services Transportation and
254 its advisory subcommittees shall meet not less often than quarterly. Administrative
255 expenses of the committee shall be borne by the Governor's Development Council. The
256 members of the committee shall receive no extra compensation or reimbursement of
257 expenses from the state for their services as members of the committee.

258 32-12-4.

259 The Georgia Coordinating Committee for Rural and Human Services Transportation shall
260 establish the State Advisory Subcommittee for Rural and Human Services Transportation
261 which shall consist of the State School Superintendent and the commissioners of the
262 Department of Transportation, Department of Human Services, Department of Behavioral
263 Health and Developmental Disabilities, Department of Community Health, Department of
264 Labor, the Governor's Development Council, and the Department of Community Affairs
265 or their respective designees. The commissioner of transportation or his or her designee
266 shall serve as chairperson of the State Advisory Subcommittee for Rural and Human
267 Services Transportation. The Georgia Coordinating Committee for Rural and Human
268 Services Transportation may also establish such additional advisory subcommittees as it
269 deems appropriate to fulfill its mission which shall consist of a representative of each
270 metropolitan planning organization and representatives from each regional commission in

271 this state and may include other local government representatives; private and public sector
272 transportation providers, both for profit and nonprofit; voluntary transportation programs
273 representatives; public transit system representatives, both rural and urban; and
274 representatives of the clients served by the various programs administered by the agencies
275 represented on the State Advisory Subcommittee for Rural and Human Services
276 Transportation. Members of advisory committees shall be responsible for their own
277 expenses and shall receive no compensation or reimbursement of expenses from the
278 Georgia Coordinating Committee for Rural and Human Services Transportation, the State
279 Advisory Subcommittee for Rural and Human Services Transportation, or the state for their
280 services as members of an advisory committee.

281 32-12-5.

282 The Georgia Coordinating Committee for Rural and Human Services Transportation shall
283 examine the manner in which transportation services are provided by the participating
284 agencies represented on the committee. Such examination shall include but not be limited
285 to:

286 (1) An analysis of all programs administered by participating agencies, including capital
287 and operating costs, and overlapping or duplication of services among such programs,
288 with emphasis on how to overcome such overlapping or duplication;

289 (2) The means by which transportation services are coordinated among state, local, and
290 federal funding source programs;

291 (3) The means by which both capital and operating costs for transportation could be
292 combined or shared among agencies, including at a minimum shared purchase of vehicles
293 and maintenance of such vehicles;

294 (4) An analysis of those areas which might appropriately be consolidated to lower the
295 costs of program delivery without sacrificing program quality to clients, including shared
296 use of vehicles for client trips regardless of the funding source which pays for their trips;

297 (5) An analysis of state of the art efforts to coordinate rural and human services
298 transportation elsewhere in the nation, including at a minimum route scheduling so as to
299 avoid duplicative trips in a given locality;

300 (6) A review of any limitations which may be imposed by various federally funded
301 programs and how the state can manage within those limitations as it reviews possible
302 sharing opportunities;

303 (7) An analysis of how agency programs interact with and impact state, local, or regional
304 transportation services performed on behalf of the general public through state, local, or
305 regional transit systems;

306 (8) An evaluation of potential cost sharing opportunities available for clients served by
307 committee agencies so as to maximize service delivery efficiencies and to obtain the
308 maximum benefit on their behalf with the limited amount of funds available; and
309 (9) An analysis of possible methods to reduce costs, including, but not limited to, greater
310 use of privatization.

311 32-12-6.
312 No later than July 1 of each year, the Governor's Development Council shall submit the
313 preliminary report of the Georgia Coordinating Committee for Rural and Human Services
314 Transportation to the members of the State Advisory Subcommittee for Rural and Human
315 Services Transportation. Comments and recommendations may be submitted to the
316 Governor's Development Council for a period of 30 days. No later than September 1 of
317 each year, the Governor's Development Council shall submit a final report to the
318 Governor's Office of Planning and Budget for review and consideration. The report shall
319 address each of the specific duties enumerated in Code Section 32-12-5 and such other
320 subject areas within its purview as the Governor's Development Council shall deem
321 appropriate. Each report shall focus on existing conditions in coordination of rural and
322 human services transportation within the state and shall make specific recommendations
323 for means to improve such current practices. Such recommendations shall address at a
324 minimum both their cost implications and impact on client service. No later than January
325 15 of each year, the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget shall submit the final report
326 of the Governor's Development Council and any affiliated budget recommendations to the
327 presiding officers of the General Assembly, with copies of said report sent to the
328 chairpersons of the transportation committees, the appropriations committees, and the
329 health and human services committees of each chamber of the General Assembly."

330 **SECTION 5.**

331 Title 48 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to revenue and taxation, is
332 amended by revising subsection (b) of Code Section 48-8-6, relating to limitations on local
333 imposition of certain taxes, as follows:

334 "(b) There shall not be imposed in any jurisdiction in this state or on any transaction in this
335 state local sales taxes, local use taxes, or local sales and use taxes in excess of 2 percent.
336 For purposes of this prohibition, the taxes affected are any sales tax, use tax, or sales and
337 use tax which is levied in an area consisting of less than the entire state, however
338 authorized, including such taxes authorized by or pursuant to constitutional amendment,
339 except that the following taxes shall not count toward or be subject to such 2 percent
340 limitation:

- 341 (1) A sales and use tax for educational purposes exempted from such limitation under
 342 Article VIII, Section VI, Paragraph IV of the Constitution;
- 343 (2) Any tax levied for purposes of a metropolitan area system of public transportation,
 344 as authorized by the amendment to the Constitution set out at Georgia Laws, 1964, page
 345 1008; the continuation of such amendment under Article XI, Section I, Paragraph IV(d)
 346 of the Constitution; and the laws enacted pursuant to such constitutional amendment;
 347 provided, however, that the exception provided for under this paragraph shall only apply
 348 ~~in~~
- 349 (A) In a county in which a tax is being imposed under subparagraph (a)(1)(D) of Code
 350 Section 48-8-111 in whole or in part for the purpose or purposes of a water capital
 351 outlay project or projects, a sewer capital outlay project or projects, a water and sewer
 352 capital outlay project or projects, water and sewer projects and costs as defined under
 353 paragraph ~~(3)~~(4) of Code Section 48-8-200, or any combination thereof and with
 354 respect to which the county has entered into an intergovernmental contract with a
 355 municipality, in which the average waste-water system flow of such municipality is not
 356 less than 85 million gallons per day, allocating proceeds to such municipality to be used
 357 solely for water and sewer projects and costs as defined under paragraph ~~(3)~~(4) of Code
 358 Section 48-8-200. The exception provided for under this ~~paragraph~~ subparagraph shall
 359 apply only during the period the tax under said subparagraph (a)(1)(D) is in effect. The
 360 exception provided for under this ~~paragraph~~ subparagraph shall not apply in any county
 361 in which a tax is being imposed under Article 2A of this chapter; or
- 362 (B) In a county in which the tax levied for purposes of a metropolitan area system of
 363 public transportation is first levied after January 1, 2010, and before November 1, 2012.
 364 Such tax shall not apply to the following:
- 365 (i) The sale or use of jet fuel to or by a qualifying airline at a qualifying airport. For
 366 purposes of this division, a 'qualifying airline' means any person which is authorized
 367 by the Federal Aviation Administration or another appropriate agency of the United
 368 States to operate as an air carrier under an air carrier operating certificate and which
 369 provides regularly scheduled flights for the transportation of passengers or cargo for
 370 hire. For purposes of this division, a 'qualifying airport' means any airport in the state
 371 that has had more than 750,000 takeoffs and landings during a calendar year; and
- 372 (ii) The sale of motor vehicles;
- 373 (3) In the event of a rate increase imposed pursuant to Code Section 48-8-96, only the
 374 amount in excess of the initial 1 percent sales and use tax and in the event of a newly
 375 imposed tax pursuant to Code Section 48-8-96, only the amount in excess of a 1 percent
 376 sales and use tax; ~~and~~
- 377 (4) A sales and use tax levied under Article 4 of this chapter; and

378 (5) A sales and use tax levied under Article 5 of this chapter.
 379 If the imposition of any otherwise authorized local sales tax, local use tax, or local sales
 380 and use tax would result in a tax rate in excess of that authorized by this subsection, then
 381 such otherwise authorized tax may not be imposed."

382 **SECTION 6.**

383 Title 48 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to revenue and taxation, is
 384 amended by adding a new article in Chapter 8 to read as follows:

385 "ARTICLE 5

386 Part 1

387 48-8-240.

388 The local governments of the State of Georgia are of vital importance to the state and its
 389 citizens. The state has an essential public interest in promoting, developing, sustaining, and
 390 assisting local governments. The General Assembly finds that the design and construction
 391 of transportation projects is a critical local government service for which adequate funding
 392 is not presently available. Many transportation projects cross multiple jurisdictional
 393 boundaries and must be coordinated in their design and construction. The General
 394 Assembly finds that the most efficient means to coordinate and fund such projects is
 395 through the creation of special districts that correspond with the boundaries of existing
 396 regional commissions. The purpose of this article is to provide for special districts that will
 397 enable the coordinated design and construction of transportation projects that will develop
 398 and promote the essential public interests of the state and its citizens at the state, regional,
 399 and local levels. The General Assembly intends through the creation of such special
 400 districts to enable the citizens within each district to decide in an election whether to
 401 authorize the imposition of a special district transportation sales and use tax to fund the
 402 projects on an investment list collaboratively developed by the affected local governments
 403 and the state. This article shall be construed liberally to achieve its purpose.

404 48-8-241.

405 (a) There are created within this state 12 special districts. The geographical boundary of
 406 each special district shall correspond with and shall be coterminous with the geographical
 407 boundary of the applicable region of the 12 regional commissions provided for in
 408 subsection (f) of Code Section 50-8-4.
 409 (b) When the imposition of a special district sales and use tax is authorized according to
 410 the procedures provided in this article within a special district, subject to the requirement

411 of referendum approval and the other requirements of this article, a special sales and use
 412 tax shall be imposed within the special district for a period of ten years which tax shall be
 413 known as the special district transportation sales and use tax.
 414 (c) Nothing in this article shall be construed as limiting the establishment of a fund or
 415 funds which would provide at least 20 years of maintenance and operation costs from
 416 proceeds of the special district transportation sales and use tax used to construct, finance,
 417 or otherwise develop transit capital projects; provided, however, that the Metropolitan
 418 Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority, created by an Act approved March 10, 1965 (Ga. L. 1965,
 419 p. 2243), as amended, shall not be authorized to use any proceeds from the special district
 420 transportation sales and use tax for expenses of maintenance and operation of such portions
 421 of the transportation system of such authority in existence on January 1, 2011.
 422 (d) Any tax imposed under this article shall be at the rate of 1 percent. Except as to rate,
 423 a tax imposed under this article shall correspond to the tax imposed by Article 1 of this
 424 chapter. No item or transaction which is not subject to taxation under Article 1 of this
 425 chapter shall be subject to a tax imposed under this article, except that a tax imposed under
 426 this article shall not apply to:
 427 (1) The sale or use of any type of fuel used for off-road heavy-duty equipment, off-road
 428 farm or agricultural equipment, or locomotives;
 429 (2) The sale or use of jet fuel to or by a qualifying airline at a qualifying airport;
 430 (3) The sale or use of fuel that is used for propulsion of motor vehicles on the public
 431 highways. For purposes of this paragraph, a motor vehicle means a self-propelled vehicle
 432 designed for operation or required to be licensed for operation upon the public highways;
 433 (4) The sale or use of energy used in the manufacturing or processing of tangible goods
 434 primarily for resale; or
 435 (5) For motor fuel as defined under paragraph (9) of Code Section 48-9-2 for public mass
 436 transit.
 437 The tax imposed pursuant to this article shall only be levied on the first \$5,000.00 of any
 438 transaction involving the sale or lease of a motor vehicle. The tax imposed pursuant to this
 439 article shall be subject to any sales and use tax exemption which is otherwise imposed by
 440 law; provided, however, that the tax levied by this article shall be applicable to the sale of
 441 food and beverages as provided for in division (57)(D)(i) of Code Section 48-8-3.
 442 48-8-242.
 443 As used in this article, the term:
 444 (1) 'Commission' means the Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission;
 445 (2) 'Cost of project' means:

- 446 (A) All costs of acquisition, by purchase or otherwise, construction, assembly,
447 installation, modification, renovation, extension, rehabilitation, operation, or
448 maintenance incurred in connection with any project of the special district or any part
449 thereof;
- 450 (B) All costs of real property or rights in property, fixtures, or personal property used
451 in or in connection with or necessary for any project of the special district or for any
452 facilities related thereto, including but not limited to the cost of all land, interests in
453 land, estates for years, easements, rights, improvements, water rights, and connections
454 for utility services; the cost of fees, franchises, permits, approvals, licenses, and
455 certificates; the cost of securing any such franchises, permits, approvals, licenses, or
456 certificates; the cost of preparation of any application therefor; and the cost of all
457 fixtures, machinery, equipment, furniture, and other property used in or in connection
458 with or necessary for any project of the special district;
- 459 (C) All costs of engineering, surveying, planning, environmental assessments, financial
460 analyses, and architectural, legal, and accounting services and all expenses incurred by
461 engineers, surveyors, planners, environmental scientists, fiscal analysts, architects,
462 attorneys, accountants, and any other necessary technical personnel in connection with
463 any project of the special district;
- 464 (D) All expenses for inspection of any project of the special district;
- 465 (E) All fees of any type charged to the special district in connection with any project
466 of the special district;
- 467 (F) All expenses of or incidental to determining the feasibility or practicability of any
468 project of the special district;
- 469 (G) All costs of plans and specifications for any project of the special district;
- 470 (H) All costs of title insurance and examinations of title with respect to any project of
471 the special district;
- 472 (I) Repayment of any loans for the advance payment of any part of any of the
473 foregoing costs, including interest thereon and any other expenses of such loans;
- 474 (J) Administrative expenses of the special district and such other expenses as may be
475 necessary or incidental to any project of the special district or the financing thereof; and
476 (K) The establishment of a fund or funds or such other reserves as the commission may
477 approve with respect to the financing and operation of any project of the special district.
478 Any cost, obligation, or expense incurred for any of the purposes specified in this
479 paragraph shall be a part of the cost of the project of the special district and may be paid
480 or reimbursed as otherwise authorized by this article.
- 481 (3) 'County' means any county created under the Constitution or laws of this state.
482 (4) 'Dealer' means a dealer as defined in paragraph (3) of Code Section 48-8-2.

- 483 (5) 'Director' means the director of planning provided for in Code Section 32-2-43.
- 484 (6) 'LARP factor' means the sum of one-fifth of the ratio between the population of a
- 485 local government's jurisdiction and the total population of the special district in which
- 486 such local government is located plus four-fifths of the ratio between the paved and
- 487 unpaved centerline road miles in the local government's jurisdiction and the total paved
- 488 and unpaved centerline road miles in the special district in which such local government
- 489 is located.
- 490 (7) 'Local government' means any municipal corporation, county, or consolidated
- 491 government created by the General Assembly or pursuant to the Constitution and laws
- 492 of this state.
- 493 (8) 'Metropolitan planning organization' or 'MPO' means the policy board of an
- 494 organization created and designated to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning
- 495 process as defined in 23 C.F.R. Section 450.
- 496 (9) 'Municipal corporation' means any incorporated city or town in this state.
- 497 (10) 'Project' means, without limitation, any new or existing airports, bike lanes, bridges,
- 498 bus and rail mass transit systems, freight and passenger rail, pedestrian facilities, ports,
- 499 roads, terminals, and all activities and structures useful and incident to providing,
- 500 operating, and maintaining the same. The term shall also include direct appropriations
- 501 to a local government for the purpose of serving as a local match for state or federal
- 502 funding.
- 503 (11) 'Regional transportation roundtable' or 'roundtable' means a conference of the local
- 504 governments of a special district created pursuant to this article held at a centralized
- 505 location within the district as chosen by the director for the purpose of establishing the
- 506 investment criteria and determining projects eligible for the investment list for the special
- 507 district. The regional transportation roundtable shall consist of two representatives from
- 508 each county, including the chairperson, sole commissioner, mayor, or chief executive
- 509 officer of the county governing authority and one mayor elected by the mayors of the
- 510 county; provided, however, that, in the event such an election ends in a tie, the mayor of
- 511 the municipal corporation with the highest population determined using the most recently
- 512 completed United States decennial census shall be deemed to have been elected as a
- 513 representative unless that mayor is already part of the roundtable. In such case, the
- 514 mayor of the municipal corporation with the second highest population shall be deemed
- 515 to have been elected as a representative. If a county has more than 90 percent of its
- 516 population residing in municipal corporations, such county shall have the mayor of the
- 517 municipal corporation with the highest population determined using the most recently
- 518 completed United States decennial census as an additional representative. The regional
- 519 transportation roundtable shall elect five representatives from among its members to

520 serve as an executive committee. The executive committee shall also include two
 521 members of the House of Representatives selected by the chairperson of the House
 522 Transportation Committee and one member of the Senate selected by the chairperson of
 523 the Senate Transportation Committee. Each member of the General Assembly appointed
 524 to the executive committee shall be a nonvoting member of the executive committee and
 525 shall represent a district which lies wholly or partially within the region represented by
 526 the executive committee. The executive committee shall not have more than one
 527 representative from any one county, but any member of the General Assembly serving
 528 on the executive committee shall not count as a representative of his or her county.
 529 (12) 'Special Regional Transportation Funding Election Act' means an Act specifically
 530 and exclusively enacted for the purpose of ordering that a referendum be held for the
 531 reimposition of the special district transportation sales and use tax within the region that
 532 includes the districts, in their entirety or any portion thereof, of the members from a local
 533 legislative delegation in the General Assembly. A majority of the signatures of the
 534 legislative delegation for a majority of the counties within the region shall be required for
 535 the bill to be placed upon the local calendar of each chamber. This method shall be
 536 exclusively used for this purpose and no other bill shall be placed or voted upon on the
 537 local calendar utilizing this method of qualification for placement thereon. This Act shall
 538 be treated procedurally by the General Assembly as a local Act and all counties within
 539 the region shall receive the legal notice requirements of a local Act.
 540 (13) 'State-wide strategic transportation plan' means the official state-wide transportation
 541 plan as defined in paragraph (6) of subsection (a) of Code Section 32-2-22.
 542 (14) 'State-wide transportation improvement program' means a state-wide prioritized
 543 listing of transportation projects as defined in paragraph (7) of subsection (a) of Code
 544 Section 32-2-22.
 545 (15) 'Transportation improvement program' means a prioritized listing of transportation
 546 projects as defined in paragraph (8) of subsection (a) of Code Section 32-2-22.

547 48-8-243.
 548 (a) Within 60 calendar days following approval by the Governor of the state-wide strategic
 549 transportation plan, the State Transportation Board shall consider the state-wide strategic
 550 transportation plan in accordance with the provisions of subsection (c) of Code Section
 551 32-2-22. Upon approval of the state-wide strategic transportation plan by the State
 552 Transportation Board, the director shall provide in written form to the local governments
 553 and any MPO's within each special district across the state recommended criteria for the
 554 development of an investment list of projects and programs. The establishment of such
 555 criteria shall comport with the investment policies provided in subsection (a) of Code

556 Section 32-2-41.1 and the state-wide strategic transportation plan. The recommended
557 criteria shall include performance goals, allocation of investments in alignment with
558 performance, and execution of projects. The state fiscal economist shall develop an
559 estimate of the proceeds of the special district transportation sales and use tax for each
560 special district using financial data supplied by the department. Such estimate shall include
561 reasonable ranges of anticipated growth, if any. The director shall include such estimates
562 and ranges in the recommended criteria for developing the draft investment list. Any local
563 government or MPO desiring to submit comments on the recommended criteria shall make
564 such submission to the director no later than September 30, 2010. On or before November
565 10, 2010, the mayors in each county shall elect the mayoral representative to the regional
566 transportation roundtable and notify the county commission chairperson and the director
567 of that mayor's name. The director shall accept comments from any MPO located wholly
568 or partially within each special district in finalizing the recommended district criteria in a
569 written report on or before November 15, 2010. Such report shall also include notice of
570 the date, time, and location of the first regional transportation roundtable for each special
571 district for the purpose of considering the recommended district criteria and for electing
572 members of the executive committee for each special district. Any amendment to the
573 recommended criteria, approval of such criteria, and election of the executive committee
574 shall be enacted by a majority vote of the representatives present at the roundtable meeting.
575 Upon approval of the criteria, the director shall promptly deliver a report to the
576 commissioner of transportation, local governments, any MPO located wholly or partially
577 within each special district and the members of the General Assembly whose districts lie
578 wholly or partially within each special district detailing the criteria approved by the
579 roundtable.

580 (b) With regard to any area of a special district that is not part of an MPO, following
581 receipt of the report provided for in subsection (a) of this Code section, and after receiving
582 comments, if any, from members of the General Assembly whose districts lie wholly or
583 partially within such area, the local governments in such area may submit projects to the
584 director to assemble a list of example investments for such special district that comport
585 with the special district's investment criteria. With regard to any area of a special district
586 that is part of an MPO, following receipt of the report provided for in subsection (a) of this
587 Code section, and after receiving comments, if any, from members of the General
588 Assembly whose districts lie wholly or partially within such area, the local governments
589 may submit projects to the director and to the MPO for the director to use to assemble a list
590 of example investments for such special district that comport with the special district's
591 investment criteria. The list of example investments for each special district shall not be
592 required to be fiscally constrained within the budget of the revenues projected to be

593 generated by each special district's sales and use tax and shall be submitted to the executive
594 committee for each regional transportation roundtable for consideration. The executive
595 committee in collaboration with the director shall choose from the list of example
596 investments to create the draft investment list, which shall be approved by majority vote
597 of the executive committee. Such draft investment list shall be fiscally constrained within
598 the ranges of revenues projected to be generated by the special district sales and use tax,
599 as determined by the state fiscal economist. The special district's draft investment list as
600 approved by the executive committee shall be considered by the regional transportation
601 roundtable. The director shall deliver the draft investment list to the local governments,
602 MPO's, and members of the General Assembly whose districts lie wholly or partially
603 within each special district for each special district not later than August 15, 2011. The
604 director shall include in the draft investment list a statement of the specific public benefits
605 to be expected upon the completion of each project on the investment list and how the
606 special district's investment criteria are furthered by each project. Examples of specific
607 public benefits include, but are not limited to, congestion mitigation, increased lane
608 capacity, public safety, and economic development. The director shall include in such
609 delivery notice of the date, time, and location of each district's executive committee
610 meeting and final regional transportation roundtable. Prior to holding the final regional
611 transportation roundtable, the executive committee shall hold, after proper notice to the
612 public, at least two public meetings in the region for the purpose of receiving public
613 comment on the draft regional investment list. The executive committee shall prepare and
614 deliver to all members of the regional roundtable and the director a summary of the public
615 comment on the regional investment list. The local governments, MPO's, and members of
616 the General Assembly whose districts lie wholly or partially within such special district
617 may submit comments on the draft investment list addressed to both the director and the
618 executive committee no later than two weeks prior to the dates of the final regional
619 transportation roundtable and the executive committee meeting, respectively, for the
620 special district. At the final regional transportation roundtable, the draft investment list
621 approved by the executive committee shall be considered for approval by a majority vote
622 of the representatives present at the roundtable. Should the roundtable reject the draft
623 investment list approved by the executive committee, the roundtable then may negotiate
624 amendments that meet the district's investment criteria to the draft investment list, which
625 shall be chosen from the list of example investments for each special district, each voted
626 on separately and requiring a majority vote of the representatives present at the roundtable
627 for approval. Upon consideration of all offered amendments, upon motion, the roundtable
628 shall vote as to the approval of the amended draft list, requiring a majority vote of the
629 representatives present at the roundtable. The approved investment list, if any, shall be

630 provided to the director. On or before October 15, 2011, the director shall deliver such list
631 to the commission, the commissioner of transportation, the executive director of the
632 Georgia Regional Transportation Authority, local governments, MPO's, and members of
633 the General Assembly whose districts lie wholly or partially within each special district for
634 each special district. The approved investment list shall include:
635 (1) The specific transportation projects to be funded;
636 (2) The anticipated schedule of such projects;
637 (3) The approximate cost of such projects; and
638 (4) The estimated amount of net proceeds to be raised by the tax including the amount
639 of proceeds to be distributed to local governments pursuant to subsection (e) of Code
640 Section 48-8-249.
641 If a roundtable does not approve the original draft investment list or an amended draft
642 investment list on or before October 15, 2011, then a special district gridlock shall be
643 declared by the director and no election shall be held in such special district. The question
644 of levying the tax shall not be submitted to the voters of the special district until after 24
645 months immediately following the month in which the special district gridlock was
646 reached.
647 (c) In the event a special district gridlock is declared, the local governments in such special
648 district shall be required to provide a 50 percent match for any local maintenance and
649 improvement grants by the Department of Transportation. Such 50 percent match
650 requirement shall remain in place until the special district roundtable approves an
651 investment list meeting the special district's investment criteria and an election is held
652 within the special district on the levy of the special district transportation sales and use tax.

653 Part 2

654 48-8-244.
655 (a) Simultaneously with the director's delivery of the approved investment list in
656 accordance with subsection (b) of Code Section 48-8-243, the roundtable shall deliver a
657 notice to the election superintendents of each county within the respective special districts.
658 Upon receipt of the notice, the election superintendents shall issue the call for an election
659 for the purpose of submitting the question of the imposition of the tax to the voters within
660 each special district. The election superintendents shall issue the call and shall conduct the
661 election in the manner authorized under Code Section 21-2-540. The first election shall
662 be held on the date of the general state-wide primary in 2012. The election superintendents
663 shall cause the date and purpose of the election to be published once a week for four weeks

664 immediately preceding the date of the election in the official organs of their respective
665 counties.

666 (b) The ballot submitting the question of the levy of the special district transportation tax
667 authorized by this article to the voters within each special district shall have written or
668 printed thereon the following:

669 ' () YES Shall _____ County's transportation system and the transportation
670 network in this region and the state be improved by providing for a 1
671 () NO percent special district transportation sales and use tax for the purpose of
672 transportation projects and programs for a period of ten years?'

673 (c) All persons desiring to vote in favor of levying the tax shall vote 'Yes' and all persons
674 opposed to levying the tax shall vote 'No.' If more than one-half of the votes cast
675 throughout the entire special district are in favor of levying the tax, then the tax shall be
676 levied as provided in this article; otherwise the tax shall not be levied and the question of
677 levying the tax shall not again be submitted to the voters of the special district until after
678 24 months immediately following the month in which the election was held. Each election
679 superintendent shall hold and conduct the election under the same rules and regulations as
680 govern special elections. Each election superintendent shall canvass the returns from his
681 or her county, declare the result of the election in that county, and certify the result to the
682 Secretary of State. The Secretary of State shall compile the results from each county in the
683 special district, declare the result of the election in the special district, and certify the result
684 to the governing authority of each local government and MPO within the special district
685 and the state revenue commissioner. The expense of the election in each county within
686 each special district shall be paid from funds of each county.

687 (d) In the event a special district sales and use tax election is held and the voters in a
688 special district do not approve the levy of the special district transportation sales and use
689 tax, the local governments in such special district shall be required to provide a 30 percent
690 match for any local maintenance and improvement grants by the Department of
691 Transportation for transportation projects and programs for at least 24 months and until
692 such time as a special district sales and use tax is approved. In the event the voters in a
693 special district approve the levy of the special district transportation sales and use tax, the
694 local governments in such special district shall be required to provide a 10 percent match
695 for any local maintenance and improvement grants by the Department of Transportation
696 for transportation projects and programs for the duration of the levy of the special district
697 transportation sales and use tax.

698 48-8-244.1.

699 The approval of the levy of the special district transportation sales and use tax in a special
700 district shall not in any way diminish the percentage of funds allocated to a special district
701 or any of the local governments within a special district under the provisions of subsection
702 (c) of Code Section 32-5-27. The amount of funds expended in a special district shall not
703 be decreased due to the use of proceeds from the special district transportation sales and
704 use tax to construct transportation projects that have a high priority in the state-wide
705 strategic transportation plan. If a special district constructs a project on the approved
706 investment list using proceeds from the special district tax, then the state funding under
707 subsection (c) of Code Section 32-5-27 shall not be diverted to priority projects in other
708 special districts.

709 48-8-245.

710 (a) If the imposition of the special district transportation sales and use tax is approved at
711 the special election, the collection of such tax shall begin on the first day of the next
712 succeeding calendar quarter beginning more than 80 days after the date of the election.
713 With respect to services which are regularly billed on a monthly basis, however, the tax
714 shall become effective with respect to and the tax shall apply to services billed on or after
715 the effective date specified in the previous sentence.

716 (b) The tax shall cease to be imposed on the earliest of the following dates:

717 (1) On the final day of the ten-year period of time specified for the imposition of the tax;
718 or

719 (2) As of the end of the calendar quarter during which the state revenue commissioner
720 determines that the tax has raised revenues sufficient to provide to the special district net
721 proceeds equal to or greater than the amount specified as the estimated amount of net
722 proceeds to be raised by the special district transportation tax.

723 (c)(1) No more than a single 1 percent tax under this article may be collected at any time
724 within a special district.

725 (2) Upon the enactment by the General Assembly of a Special Regional Transportation
726 Funding Election Act and the adoption of resolutions by the governing bodies of a
727 majority of the counties within a special district in which a tax authorized by this article
728 is in effect, an election may be held for the reimposition of the tax while the tax is in
729 effect. Proceedings for the development of an investment list and for the reimposition
730 of a tax shall be in the same manner as provided for in Code Section 48-8-243.

731 (3) Following the expiration of the special district transportation sales and use tax under
732 this article, or following a special election in which voters in a special district rejected the
733 imposition of the tax, upon the passage by the General Assembly of a Special Regional

734 Transportation Funding Election Act and the adoption of resolutions by the governing
735 bodies of a majority of counties within a special district, an election may be held for the
736 imposition of a tax under this article in the same manner as provided in this article for the
737 initial imposition of such tax. Such subsequent election shall be held on the date of a
738 state-wide general primary. The development of the investment list for such special
739 district shall follow the dates established in Code Section 48-8-243 with the years
740 adjusted appropriately, and such schedule shall be posted on a website developed by the
741 state revenue commissioner to be used exclusively for matters related to the special
742 district transportation sales and use tax within 30 days of the later of the state revenue
743 commissioner's receipt of notice from the final county governing body required to adopt
744 a resolution or of the passage of the Special Regional Transportation Funding Election
745 Act by the General Assembly.

746 48-8-246.

747 A tax levied pursuant to this article shall be exclusively administered and collected by the
748 state revenue commissioner for the use and benefit of the special district imposing the tax.
749 Such administration and collection shall be accomplished in the same manner and subject
750 to the same applicable provisions, procedures, and penalties provided in Article 1 of this
751 chapter; provided, however, that all moneys collected from each taxpayer by the state
752 revenue commissioner shall be applied first to such taxpayer's liability for taxes owed the
753 state; and provided, further, that the state revenue commissioner may rely upon a
754 representation by or in behalf of the special district or the Secretary of State that such a tax
755 has been validly imposed, and the state revenue commissioner and the state revenue
756 commissioner's agents shall not be liable to any person for collecting any such tax which
757 was not validly imposed. Dealers shall be allowed a percentage of the amount of the tax
758 due and accounted for and shall be reimbursed in the form of a deduction in submitting,
759 reporting, and paying the amount due if such amount is not delinquent at the time of
760 payment. The deduction shall be at the rate and subject to the requirements specified under
761 subsections (b) through (f) of Code Section 48-8-50.

762 48-8-247.

763 Each sales tax return remitting taxes collected under this article shall separately identify
764 the location of each retail establishment at which any of the taxes remitted were collected
765 and shall specify the amount of sales and the amount of taxes collected at each
766 establishment for the period covered by the return in order to facilitate the determination
767 by the state revenue commissioner that all taxes imposed by this article are collected and
768 distributed according to situs of sale.

769 48-8-248.

770 The proceeds of the tax collected by the state revenue commissioner in each special district
771 under this article shall be disbursed as soon as practicable after collection to the Georgia
772 State Financing and Investment Commission to be maintained in a trust fund and
773 administered by the commission on behalf of the special district imposing the tax. Such
774 proceeds for each special district shall be kept separate from other funds of the commission
775 and shall not in any manner be commingled with other funds of the commission.

776 48-8-249.

777 (a) The proceeds received from the tax authorized by this article shall be used within the
778 special district receiving proceeds of the tax exclusively for the projects on the approved
779 investment list for such district as provided in subsection (b) of Code Section 48-8-243.
780 Authorized uses of tax proceeds in connection with such projects shall include the cost of
781 project defined in paragraph (2) of Code Section 48-8-242.

782 (b) The commission shall be responsible for the proper application of the proceeds
783 received from the tax authorized by this article for the approved investment list for each
784 special district. The commission shall delegate the management of the budget, schedule,
785 execution, and delivery of the projects contained in the approved investment list as follows:

786 (1) The commission shall contract with the Department of Transportation for all
787 transportation projects except bus and rail mass transit systems and passenger rail in any
788 special district the boundaries of which are not wholly contained within a single MPO;
789 and

790 (2) The commission shall contract with the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority
791 only for projects that are bus and rail mass transit systems and passenger rail within any
792 special district the boundaries of which are wholly contained within a single MPO.

793 Upon entering into contracts with the Department of Transportation or the Georgia
794 Regional Transportation Authority as provided above, the commission shall dispense funds
795 upon the request of the commissioner of transportation or the executive director of the
796 Georgia Regional Transportation Authority, which request shall include certification of the
797 completion of the project or project element for which funds are requested. Payment shall
798 be made promptly upon approval by the construction division or the financing and
799 investment division of the commission, and such payments shall not require any other
800 official action by the commission. The use of funds so dispensed shall be subject to review
801 and audit by the construction division and the financing and investment division of the
802 commission and action by the commission upon receipt of complaint or if otherwise
803 warranted. The Department of Transportation and Georgia Regional Transportation
804 Authority shall consult with the commission on at least a quarterly basis regarding the

805 progress and performance in the execution, schedule, and delivery of projects on the
806 approved investment list.

807 (c) In managing the execution, schedule, and delivery of the projects on the approved
808 investment list for a special district, the Department of Transportation or Georgia Regional
809 Transportation Authority, as appropriate, shall determine whether a project should be
810 designed and constructed by the Department of Transportation, by a local government, or
811 by another public or private entity. In making such determination the following shall be
812 considered:

813 (1) Whether such project is on the state-wide transportation improvement program, the
814 state-wide strategic transportation plan, or a transportation improvement program;

815 (2) The type and estimated cost of the project;

816 (3) The location of the project and whether it encompasses multiple jurisdictions;

817 (4) The experience of a local government or governments or a public or private entity in
818 designing and constructing such project as set forth in an application in a form to be
819 provided by the commissioner of transportation or the executive director of the Georgia
820 Regional Transportation Authority; and

821 (5) The recommendation of the MPO, if any, for such special district.

822 Following the decision, the Department of Transportation, the local government or
823 governments, or another public or private entity as determined under this subsection shall
824 contract for implementing the projects in accordance with applicable state and federal
825 requirements.

826 (d) The commission shall maintain or cause to be maintained an adequate record-keeping
827 system for each project funded by a special district transportation sales and use tax. An
828 annual audit shall be paid for by each special district and conducted by an independent
829 auditing firm as selected by the commission. Such audit shall include a schedule which
830 shows for each such project the original estimated cost, the current estimated cost if it is
831 not the original estimated cost, amounts expended in prior years, and amounts expended
832 in the current year. Such audit shall verify and test expenditures sufficient to provide
833 assurances that the schedule is fairly presented in relation to the financial statements. The
834 audit report on the financial statements shall include an opinion, or disclaimer of opinion,
835 as to whether the schedule is presented fairly in all material respects in relation to the
836 financial statements taken as a whole.

837 (e) Twenty-five percent of the proceeds received from the tax authorized by this article
838 shall be distributed to the local governments within the special district in which the tax is
839 imposed if such special district's boundaries are not coterminous with an MPO. Fifteen
840 percent of the proceeds received from the tax authorized by this article shall be distributed
841 to the local governments within the special district in which the tax is imposed if such

842 special district's boundaries are wholly contained within a single MPO. Such percentages
843 shall be allocated to each local government by multiplying the LARP factor of each local
844 government by the total amount of funds to be distributed to all the local governments in
845 the special district. Proceeds described in this subsection shall be distributed to the local
846 governments on an ongoing basis as they are received by the commission. Such proceeds
847 shall be used by the local governments only for transportation projects as defined in
848 paragraph (10) of Code Section 48-8-242 and may also serve as the local match as required
849 for state transportation projects and grants. If a special district receives from the tax net
850 proceeds in excess of the investment list approved by the roundtable for the imposition of
851 the tax or in excess of the actual cost of the project or projects on such investment list, then
852 such excess proceeds shall be distributed among the local governments within the special
853 district in accordance with this subsection.

854 48-8-250.

855 Not later than December 15 of each year, the state revenue commissioner shall publish, on
856 the website created pursuant to paragraph (3) of subsection (c) of Code Section 48-8-245,
857 a simple, nontechnical report which shows for each project in the investment list approved
858 by the director the original estimated cost, the current estimated cost if it is not the original
859 estimated cost, amounts expended in prior years, and amounts expended in the current year
860 with respect to each such project. The report shall also include a statement of what
861 corrective action the commissioner of transportation and the executive director of the
862 Georgia Regional Transportation Authority intend to implement with respect to each
863 project which is underfunded or behind schedule and a statement of any surplus funds
864 which have not been expended for a project.

865 48-8-251.

866 (a) There is created a Citizens Review Panel for each special district in which voters
867 approved the levy of the special district sales and use tax to be composed of three citizen
868 members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and two citizen
869 members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor. Each member must be a resident of the
870 special district of which Citizens Review Panel they are appointed to serve.
871 (b) In the event that any vacancy for any cause shall occur in the membership of the
872 committee, such vacancy shall be filled by an appointment made by the official authorized
873 by law to make such appointment within 45 days of the occurrence of such vacancy.
874 (c) The panel shall, by majority vote of those members present and voting, elect from their
875 number a chairperson and vice chairperson who shall serve at the pleasure of the panel.

876 (d) The panel shall meet in regular session at least three days each year either at the state
877 capitol in Atlanta or at such other meeting place within the state and may have such other
878 additional meetings as may be called by the chairperson or by a majority of the members
879 of the panel upon reasonable written notice to all members of the panel. Further, the
880 chairperson of the panel is authorized from time to time to call meetings of subcommittees
881 of the panel which are established by panel policy at places inside or outside the state
882 when, in the opinion of the chairperson, the meetings of the subcommittee are needed to
883 attend properly to the panel's business. A majority of the panel shall constitute a quorum
884 for the transaction of all business. Any power of the panel may be exercised by a majority
885 vote of those members present at any meeting at which there is a quorum.
886 (e) Members shall receive for each day of actual attendance at meetings of the panel and
887 the subcommittee meetings the per diem and transportation costs prescribed in Code
888 Section 45-7-21, and a like sum shall be paid for each day actually spent in studying the
889 transportation needs of the state or attending other functions as a representative of the
890 panel, not to exceed ten days in any calendar year, but no member shall receive such per
891 diem for any day for which such member receives any other per diem pursuant to such
892 Code section. In addition, members shall receive actual transportation costs while traveling
893 by public carrier or the legal mileage rate for the use of a personal automobile in
894 connection with such attendance and study. Such per diem and expense shall be paid from
895 the funds of the special district's revenues from the special district sales and use tax upon
896 presentation, by members of the panel, of vouchers approved by the chairperson.
897 (f) The panel shall be charged with review of the administration of the projects and
898 programs included on the approved investment list. The panel may make such
899 recommendations to and require such reports from the Department of Transportation, the
900 Georgia Regional Transportation Authority, any other agency or instrumentality of the
901 state, any political subdivision of the state, and any agency or instrumentality of such
902 political subdivisions as it may deem appropriate and necessary from time to time in the
903 interest of the region.
904 (g) Upon the completion of a project on the investment list, the panel shall annually review
905 the specific public benefits identified in the investment list to ascertain the degree to which
906 such benefits have been attained. This benefit review report shall be delivered to the
907 director and the state revenue commissioner and shall be published on the website created
908 pursuant to paragraph (3) of subsection (c) of Code Section 48-8-245.
909 (h) Beginning January 1, 2013, and annually thereafter, the panel shall provide a report to
910 the General Assembly of its actions during the previous year. The report shall be available
911 for public inspection on the website created pursuant to paragraph (3) of subsection (c) of
912 Code Section 48-8-245. The report shall include, but not be limited to, an update on the

913 progress on each project on the investment list for the region, including the amount of
914 funds spent on each project.

915 48-8-252.

916 Where a special district transportation sales and use tax under this article has been paid
917 with respect to tangible personal property by the purchaser either in another special district
918 within the state or in a tax jurisdiction outside the state, the tax may be credited against the
919 tax authorized to be imposed by this article upon the same property. If the amount of sales
920 or use tax so paid is less than the amount of the use tax due under this article, the purchaser
921 shall pay an amount equal to the difference between the amount paid in the other tax
922 jurisdiction and the amount due under this article. The state revenue commissioner may
923 require such proof of payment in another local tax jurisdiction as he or she deems necessary
924 and proper. No credit shall be granted, however, against the tax imposed under this article
925 for tax paid in another jurisdiction if the tax paid in such other jurisdiction is used to obtain
926 a credit against any other sales and use tax levied in the special district.

927 48-8-253.

928 No tax provided for in this article shall be imposed upon the sale of tangible personal
929 property which is ordered by and delivered to the purchaser at a point outside the
930 geographical area of the special district in which the tax is imposed regardless of the point
931 at which title passes, if the delivery is made by the seller's vehicle, United States mail, or
932 common carrier or by private or contract carrier licensed by the Surface Transportation
933 Board or the Georgia Public Service Commission.

934 48-8-254.

935 (a) As used in this Code section, the term 'building and construction materials' means all
936 building and construction materials, supplies, fixtures, or equipment, any combination of
937 such items, and any other leased or purchased articles when the materials, supplies,
938 fixtures, equipment, or articles are to be utilized or consumed during construction or are
939 to be incorporated into construction work pursuant to a bona fide written construction
940 contract.

941 (b) No tax provided for in this article shall be imposed upon the sale or use of building and
942 construction materials when the contract pursuant to which the materials are purchased or
943 used was advertised for bid prior to the voters' approval of the levy of the tax and the
944 contract was entered into as a result of a bid actually submitted in response to the
945 advertisement prior to approval of the levy of the tax.

946 48-8-255.

947 Subject to the approval of the House and Senate Transportation Committees, the state
 948 revenue commissioner shall have the power and authority to promulgate such rules and
 949 regulations as shall be necessary for the effective and efficient administration and
 950 enforcement of the collection of the special district transportation sales and use tax
 951 authorized by this article.

952 48-8-256.

953 The tax authorized by this article shall not be subject to any allocation or balancing of state
 954 and federal funds provided for by general law, nor may such proceeds be considered or
 955 taken into account in any such allocation or balancing."

956 **SECTION 7.**

957 Title 50 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to state government, is amended
 958 by adding a new Code section as follows:

959 "50-32-5.

960 (a) The State of Georgia, particularly the metropolitan Atlanta region, faces a number of
 961 critical issues relating to its transportation system and ever-increasing traffic congestion.
 962 In light of the dwindling resources available to help solve the problems, it is imperative that
 963 all available resources be used to maximum efficiency in order to alleviate the gridlock in
 964 and around the metropolitan Atlanta region. There exists a need for a thorough
 965 examination of our current transportation system and the methodical development of
 966 legislative proposals for a regional transit governing authority in Georgia.

967 (b) In order to find practical, workable solutions to these problems, there is created the
 968 Transit Governance Study Commission to be composed of: four Senators from the Atlanta
 969 Regional Commission area to be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, four
 970 Representatives from the Atlanta Regional Commission area to be appointed by the
 971 Speaker of the House of Representatives, the chairperson of the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid
 972 Transit Oversight Committee, the chairperson of the Atlanta Regional Commission, the
 973 chairperson of the Regional Transit Committee of the Atlanta Regional Commission, one
 974 staff member from the Atlanta Regional Commission to be selected by the chairperson of
 975 the Atlanta Regional Commission, the executive director of the Georgia Regional
 976 Transportation Authority, the general manager of the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit
 977 Authority, and the directors of any other county transit systems operating in the Atlanta
 978 Regional Commission area.

979 (c) The commission shall elect, by a majority vote, one of its legislative members to serve
 980 as chairperson of the commission and such other officers as the commission deems

981 appropriate. The commission shall meet at least quarterly at the call of the chairperson.
982 The commission may conduct such meetings and hearings at such places and at such times
983 as it may deem necessary or convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its
984 powers, perform its duties, and accomplish its objectives and purposes as contained in this
985 Code section.
986 (d) All officers and agencies of the three branches of state government are directed to
987 provide all appropriate information and assistance as requested by the commission.
988 (e) The commission shall undertake a study of the issues described in this Code section
989 and recommend specific legislation which the commission deems necessary or appropriate.
990 Specifically, the commission shall prepare a preliminary report on the feasibility of
991 combining all of the regional public transportation entities into an integrated regional
992 transit body. This preliminary report shall be completed on or before December 31, 2010,
993 and be delivered to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, and the Speaker of the House
994 of Representatives. The commission shall make a final report of its findings and
995 recommendations, with specific language for proposed legislation, if any, on or before
996 August 1, 2011, to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, and the Speaker of the House
997 of Representatives. The commission shall stand abolished on August 1, 2011, unless
998 extended by subsequent Act of the General Assembly.
999 (f) The Atlanta Regional Commission in conjunction with the Georgia Regional
1000 Transportation Authority and the department's director of planning shall utilize federal and
1001 state planning funds to continue the development of the Atlanta region's Concept 3 transit
1002 proposal, including assessment of potential economic benefit to the region and the state,
1003 prioritization of corridors based on highest potential economic benefit and lowest
1004 environmental impact, and completion of environmental permitting. Any new transit
1005 management instrumentality created as a result of the Transit Governance Study
1006 Commission created pursuant to this Code section shall participate in the Concept 3
1007 development activities that remain incomplete at the time of the creation of the new
1008 regional transit body."

1009 **SECTION 8.**

1010 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law
1011 without such approval, except that Part 2 of Article 5 of Chapter 8 of Title 48 as set forth in
1012 Section 6 of this Act shall become effective January 1, 2011.

1013 **SECTION 9.**

1014 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.

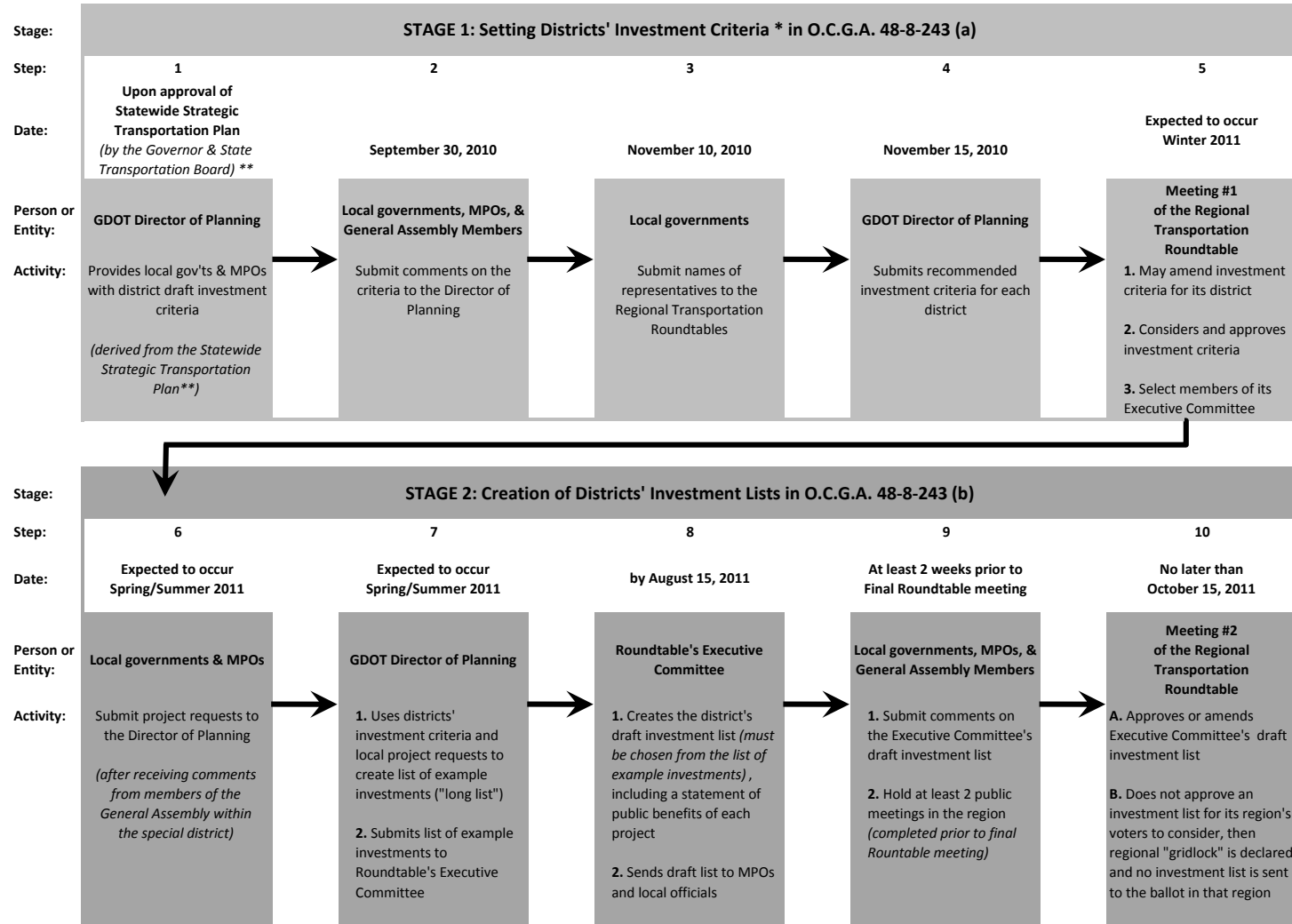
Appendix C

DRAFT AND FINAL CRITERIA

The timeline for the Atlanta region, the draft criteria for the 11 regions and the Atlanta region, the responses to comments submitted on the Atlanta region criteria, and the approved criteria for the Atlanta region are included on the following pages.

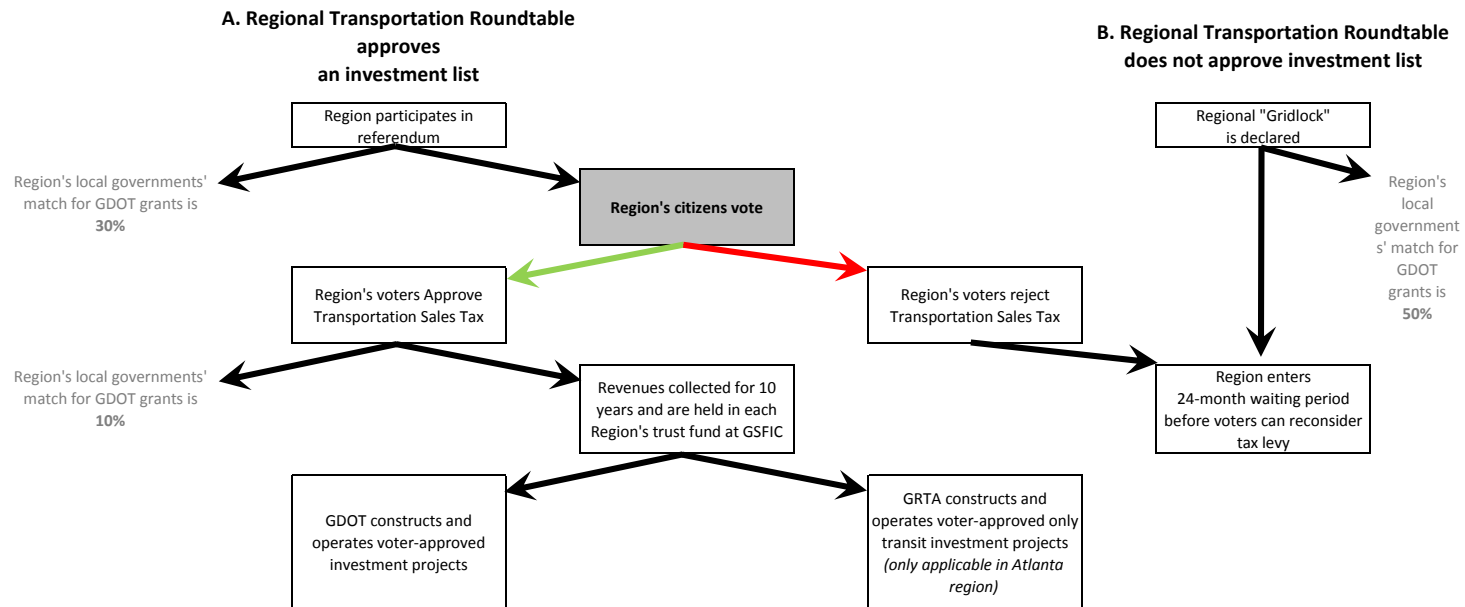
Transportation Investment Act of 2010: Attachment B Timeline for Creation of Investment Criteria and Lists

LC 34 2763ERS - As Passed Version (see Section 6 of the legislation for more detailed information)



Continued on next page

STAGE 3: Regional Participation and Vote in O.C.G.A. 48-8-244



* Criteria is specified as transportation network performance goals, allocation of investments to programs that can deliver the performance goals, and execution of projects.

** The Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan is based on the state's transportation investment policies in Georgia law and includes multiple economic development goals such as growth in private sector employment, reliable commutes, and freight movement efficiencies. The Strategic Plan is currently in final as of April 10, 2010, and was approved by the Governor on June 2, 2010 when HB 277 was signed into law. The State Transportation Board subsequently approved the Strategic Plan at the June Board meeting.

Attachment C

Draft Criteria for Special Tax Districts outside of Atlanta Region

(Note: At this time, the draft criteria are the same for all 11 districts outside of Atlanta. We expect some variation as the process continues)

*Recommended Criteria for the Development of an Investment List of Projects and Program
Excludes 25% Local Share to be distributed by formula to Cities and Counties.*

OVERVIEW

Outcomes - The following desired outcomes drove the development of the draft investment criteria:

- Strategic use of funds to achieve the best value for taxpayers' dollars and improvement of the region's transportation network.
- Transportation projects delivered on time and on budget.
- Public support for projects funded by the regional sales tax and public trust that state and local governments will deliver on their promises.

Guiding Principles - The following principles guided the development of the draft investment criteria:

- Investment list is developed with a focus on deliverability.
- Projects are from existing plans and/or studies (for example, the GDOT work program, MPO long range plan and short range program, county transportation studies, etc.).
- Investment list is consistent with the policies of the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan and the MPO's plan if applicable.
- Investment list encourages effective multimodal solutions that appeal to a broad spectrum of the region's citizens.

Framework for Investment Criteria

The final investment list of projects to be funded by the Transportation Investment Act's (TIA) regional transportation sales tax referendum will be developed by first setting investment allocation target ranges for each program area (see #1 on page 2) based on the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan (SSTP) and the MPO long range plan, if applicable. These will be used to align the Unconstrained Example Investment List (UEIL) with performance goals for each program area within the revenue expected to be available. Next, projects being considered for support by the TIA revenue will be evaluated using qualitative screening criteria (see #on page 2) designed to allow further consideration of projects that align with the SSTP and MPO plans(if applicable) and can be delivered within the timeframe of the regional sales tax.

The Transportation Investment Act also requires that the criteria include performance goals and that projects on the investment list include a "statement of expected public benefits." Performance goals and public benefits analysis are inter-related and become one of the many tools to assist the Director of Planning to formulate the Unconstrained Example Investment List. The performance goals and public benefits will be provided along with the Unconstrained Example Investment List at a later date. The kind of metrics that will be used to determine the public benefit will come from the SSTP and MPO plans, if applicable. Ultimately, they are intended to assist the Roundtable in selecting the best projects and to allow the region's citizens a solid evaluation of the use of their sales tax dollars.

Draft Criteria for Special Tax Districts outside of Atlanta Region

1. Draft Investment Allocation Target Ranges

- a. Minimum and maximum investment goals (for the 10-year period) for program areas will support implementation of the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan and MPO plan, if applicable.
- b. Program areas and allocation ranges:

Program Areas	Target Ranges
Roadway Capital	50-70%
Transit Capital	0-10%
Transit Operations and Maintenance	0-10%
Safety	15-30%
Traffic Operations	0-20%
Non-motorized (Bike/Pedestrian)	0-5%
Freight and Logistics	2-10%
Aviation	0-5%
Roadway and Bridge Maintenance(Asset Management)	0-5%

2. Draft Screening Criteria by Program Area

a. Roadway Capital

- i. The projects that qualify under “roadway capital” serve origins or destinations of trips to/from employment and activity centers throughout the region. These projects could be roadway widenings, interchanges, interstate improvements, economic development corridors, etc.
- ii. Emphasis will be on the construction phase, but projects can be included in the Unconstrained Example Investment List which are able to demonstrate assurances of deliverability of any funded phase within the 10 year sales tax period, including preliminary engineering, environmental reviews, and right-of-way.
- iii. The Director of Planning recommends prioritization of the project selection as follows: *(Tiers reflect the level of certainty in deliverability)*
 - a) Tier One – Projects that have construction phases which can begin within six years of the start of the regional sales tax.
 - b) Tier Two – Projects which have an approved concept report with no other work completed.
 - c) Tier Three – Projects recommended and endorsed by the local governments, MPO, or legislators but which have not reached the milestones noted above.

b. Transit Capital

- i. Generally, projects included in the investment list should have shown considerable progress to assure deliverability within the 10 year sales tax period. Emphasis will be placed on the construction phase or acquisition of capital equipment.
- ii. Transit capital projects should have a contingency plan to operate or liquidate assets if future operating funds are based on a renewal of HB 277.
- iii. Transit service for the proposed project should ultimately connect to employment centers or activity centers in the region and provide increased mobility for individuals.
- iv. Capital expenditures may include new, systematic replacement, upgrades, refurbishment, etc

c. Transit Operations and Maintenance

- i. Any funding must first serve to enhance the existing local or regional transit systems in operation as of January 1, 2011. After the existing systems are brought up to a state of good repair, operations and maintenance funding from the regional sales tax would then be allocated to new transit capacity projects.

d. Safety

- i. Projects which align with the key emphasis areas of the Governor's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP.)
- ii. Priority is given to projects that correct or improve a road location or feature with high potential for safety improvement, or addresses a specific highway safety deficiency. The objective of each project is to reduce fatalities and serious injuries.
- iii. Projects may include intersection improvements to address safety concerns, shoulder widening, pedestrian/bicycle safety improvements, projects that eliminate hazards at rail-roadway crossings, traffic calming measures, installation of guardrails, crash attenuators, traffic signals, signage, and pavement marking improvement projects, etc.

e. Traffic Operations and High Tech Traffic Solutions

- i. Projects which improve or enhance the region's intelligent transportation system network, incident management program, or signal coordination and timing where applicable.
- ii. Projects address an existing operational issue resulting in an improved level of service or reduction in delay or other congestion costs.

f. Non-motorized

- i. Projects which are identified in a Bike/Ped Plan.
- ii. Projects which provide connectivity to a regional employment or activity center.

- iii. Projects which provide connection to existing or planned transit including bus stops and multi-modal centers. (Note: Off-roadway paths/streetscapes, etc. should be pursued using the 25% discretionary share.)

g. Freight and Logistics

- i. Projects which address the demand for goods movement into, out of, and within the state as identified through the Statewide Freight and Logistics Study (ongoing).
- ii. Projects which enhance the flow of freight transported by trucks and/or rail.
- iii. Projects which facilitate the transfer of freight between modes. In particular, projects that improve the flow of freight into/out of Georgia's existing ports.

h. Aviation

- i. Projects at new or existing non-commercial service airports which are contained in the airport's 5-year Airport Capital Improvement Program submitted annually to the GA DOT and FAA. The types of projects included in this area are runways, taxiways, aprons, and navigational aids.
- ii. Projects which are consistent with the goals and objectives of Georgia's Statewide Aviation System Plan.

i. Roadway and Bridge Maintenance (asset management)

- i. Priority for resurfacing/rehabilitation needs is on state routes or routes that are considered regionally significant as defined by roads that connect regional employment centers. Priority will be based on PACES and bridge ratings provided by GDOT. (Note: Off-system resurfacing should be pursued using the 25% discretionary share.)

Adopted by the Atlanta Roundtable, 12/17/10

REGIONAL CRITERIA FOR THE ATLANTA 10-COUNTY SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT

- These Regional Criteria for development of an investment list of projects and programs were developed based on the Final Recommended Criteria from the GDOT Director of Planning, 11/8/10, and refined by Roundtable Members during recent Conference Calls. Content changes are underscored.
- The Regional Criteria do not apply to the 15% Local Share to be distributed by formula to cities and counties.

Framework for the Atlanta Region Investment Criteria

Definitions:

- Unconstrained Example Investment List – an example list of projects that comport with approved criteria developed by the Director of Planning; list does not have to be fiscally constrained.
- Constrained *Draft* Investment List – developed from the Unconstrained Example Investment List by the Roundtable’s Executive Committee in collaboration with the Director of Planning; list is fiscally constrained by the projected revenue of a 10-year sales tax.
- Constrained *Final* investment List – developed from the Constrained *Draft* Investment List (and amended with projects from the Unconstrained Example Investment List, if needed) by the Roundtable and approved; list is fiscally constrained by the projected revenue of a 10-year sales tax and deliverable within the 10 year timeframe.
- Discretionary Funds- 15% of all revenue collected by the sales tax will be redistributed to the counties and cities within the region using the LARP factor (a combination of population and lane miles). Each jurisdiction will determine how to spend these dollars. Projects are not subject to the criteria or the Roundtable’s approval. However, these projects will play an important role in the public’s approval of a regional sales tax.

Process:

- After the criteria are approved by the Roundtable, the Director of Planning, in collaboration with ARC and local jurisdictions, will develop the Unconstrained Example Investment List by evaluating the extent to which submitted projects satisfy the approved screening criteria.
- Projects that meet the criteria, align with the SSTP and PLAN 2040, area currently listed in an approved plan and can be delivered within the timeframe of the regional sales tax will be eligible for inclusion on the Unconstrained Example Investment List.
- Next, the Director of Planning will determine the specific public benefits to be expected upon the completion of each project on the Unconstrained Example Investment List and assess how each project furthers the goals of the Atlanta region’s investment criteria. A number of performance

Adopted by the Atlanta Roundtable, 12/17/10

measures will be used to evaluate each project's contribution. Metrics from the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan and Plan 2040 will be used to determine the public benefit for each project. The performance measures and public benefits will be provided along with the Unconstrained Example Investment List to the Roundtable and the Executive Committee. These are intended to assist the Executive Committee and the Roundtable in selecting the best projects and provide the region's citizens a solid evaluation of the use of their sales tax dollars.

- The Executive Committee in collaboration with the Director of Planning will use all this information and extensive public feedback to create the Constrained Draft Investment List from the Unconstrained Example Investment List (due to the Roundtable no later than August 15, 2011). The law only requires two public hearings, but it is the intention of the Atlanta Roundtable to do extensive public outreach including polling and public forums throughout this process.
- The Roundtable may also use this information to amend the Constrained Draft Investment List with projects from the Unconstrained Example Investment List to create the Final Investment List (Roundtable must approve by October 15, 2011).
- Finally, if the regional sales tax referendum is approved by the voters of a special district, the Director of Planning will track and report on the funding, execution, and performance of the projects in the district's Constrained Final Investment List.

Final Recommended Criteria for the Atlanta 10-County Special Tax District

- I. The project list should support the **performance goals** of the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan:
 - Support Georgia’s economic growth and competitiveness.
 - Ensure safety and security.
 - Maximize the value of Georgia’s assets, getting the most out of the existing network.
 - Minimize the impact on the environment.

- II. The project list should achieve the following **outcomes**:
 - Achieve the best value for taxpayers' dollars and improve the region’s transportation network.
 - Transportation projects¹ delivered on time and on budget.
 - Public support for projects funded by the regional sales tax and public trust that state and local governments will deliver on their promises.
 - Investments should improve regional mobility.

- III. The project list development should be guided by the following **principles**:
 - Investment list is developed with a focus on deliverability.
 - Projects should come from existing plans and/or studies (for example, the GDOT work program, ARC long range plan and short range program, ARC Congestion Management Process, county transportation studies, etc.).
 - Investment list is consistent with the policies of the SSTP and policies of the Atlanta Region’s PLAN 2040.
 - Investment list encourages effective multimodal solutions that appeal to a broad spectrum of the region’s citizens and address the region’s rapidly growing older adult population.

¹ “Project” means, without limitation, any new or existing airports, bike lanes, bridges, bus and rail mass transit systems, freight and passenger rail, pedestrian facilities, ports, roads, terminals, and all activities and structures useful and incident to providing, operating, and maintaining the same. The term shall also include direct appropriations to a local government for the purpose of serving as a local match for state or federal funding.

- The project list should demonstrate regional equity in order to ensure it attracts the support of voters from the entire region. Regional equity will be measured by the outcomes of specific projects not the dollar amounts spent on projects in specific jurisdictions.
- Both the unconstrained and final list of projects may include “packaged projects” that address connectivity issues for the regional transportation network. These projects can include, but are not limited to, last mile connectivity, bicycle, pedestrian safety and capital resurfacing and rehabilitation projects.
- The criteria are designed to create a list of projects that have public support, can be delivered, and produce results for the citizens. The criteria are intended to be interpreted with enough flexibility to achieve these objectives and to create an overall list that is supported by the roundtable and the citizens of the region.

IV. Projects will be evaluated by the following **criteria**:

a. Applicable to All Program Areas

- i. Emphasis will be on the construction phase or acquisition of capital equipment; however project phases other than construction can be included in the Unconstrained Example Investment List. Preference will be given for preliminary engineering, right-of-way, and environmental reviews which ultimately deliver a construction project within the 10-year sales tax period.
- ii. Each project phase included in the investment list, and each phase necessary to complete the same, regardless of funding source, must demonstrate full funding. For projects with preliminary engineering and/or right-of-way funded by Transportation Investment Act revenue, construction funds must be shown in the Atlanta region’s long range transportation plan adopted by ARC.
- iii. Emphasis will be on delivery. All project phases funded with Transportation Investment Act revenue should be able to be completed or underway within ten years. The Director of Planning recommends that approximately 40% of the total expected Transportation Investment Act funding should be allocated to project phases that could be completed or underway within six years of the start of the regional sales tax, and the remaining funds should be allocated to projects that could be completed or underway within ten years of the start of the regional sales tax. (Excludes 15% discretionary local share to be distributed by formula to cities and counties.)

b. Roadway Capital

The projects that qualify under “roadway capital” serve origins or destinations of trips to/from and within major existing and proposed employment and activity centers throughout the region.² Qualified roadway capital projects should improve the most congested regional corridors as determined through ARC’s Congestion Management Process, Regional Strategic Transportation System and Regional Thoroughfare Network. These projects could be new roads, roadway widenings, interchanges, interstate improvements, bridges, etc.

c. Roadway and Bridge Maintenance (asset management)

- i. Priority for resurfacing/rehabilitation needs are for facilities on the Regional Strategic Transportation System developed by the ARC, with emphasis on connecting major regional employment or activity centers. Priority will be based on risk and on PACES ratings provided by GDOT. (Note: Off-system resurfacing should be pursued using the 15% discretionary share.)
- ii. Bridge maintenance and replacement shall be determined based on ratings provided by GDOT.

d. Safety and Traffic Operations

- i. Safety
 - a) Projects that align with the key emphasis areas of the Governor’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP).
 - b) Priority is given to projects that correct or improve a road location or feature with high potential for safety improvement, or addresses a specific highway safety deficiency. The objective of each project must be to reduce fatalities and serious injuries.
 - c) Projects may include intersection improvements to address safety concerns, shoulder widenings, pedestrian/bicycle safety improvements, hazard eliminations at rail-roadway crossings, traffic calming measures, installation of guardrails, crash attenuators, traffic signal upgrades, signage, and pavement marking improvement projects, etc.
- ii. Traffic Operations
 - a) Projects that improve or enhance the region’s intelligent transportation system network, incident management program, or signal coordination and timing.
 - b) Projects addressing an existing operational issue resulting in an improved level of service or reduction in delay or other congestion costs.

² Major regional employment and activity centers are Region Centers and Regional Town Centers as defined in ARC’s PLAN 2040 Regional Development Guide.

e. Freight and Logistics

- i. Projects that address the demand for goods movement into, out of, and within the state as identified through the Statewide Freight and Logistics Study (ongoing), the Atlanta Regional Freight Mobility Plan and the Atlanta Strategic Truck Route Master Plan adopted by the ARC.
- ii. Projects that enhance the flow of freight transported by trucks and/or rail.
- iii. Projects that facilitate the transfer of freight between modes.

f. Aviation

- i. Projects at new or existing airports that are contained in the airport's 5-year Airport Capital Improvement Program submitted annually to GDOT and FAA. The types of projects included in this area are runways, taxiways, aprons, and navigational aids.
- ii. Projects consistent with the goals and objectives of Georgia's Statewide Aviation System Plan.

g. Bicycle and Pedestrian

- i. Projects consistent with the Atlanta Region's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
- ii. Projects that provide connectivity to/from or within a major regional employment or activity center.
- iii. Projects that provide connection to/from existing or planned transit including bus stops and multi-modal centers.

(Note: Projects such as landscaping and recreational paths should be pursued using the 15% discretionary share.)

h. Transit³ Capital

- i. To comply with the Transportation Investment Act Section 7, the highest consideration will be given to the projects that are most highly prioritized by ARC (in conjunction with the Director of Planning and GRTA) per economic benefit, lowest environmental impact, and completion of environmental permitting (O.C.G.A. 50-32-5 (f)). Capital expenditures may include new, systematic replacement, upgrades, refurbishment, and other capital project expenditures.
- ii. New fixed guideway facilities should also include a 20-year operating plan. Funds for the operations may come from any identified source including Transportation Investment Act transit operation funds and its authorized reserves under O.C.G.A. 48-8-241(c).
- iii. Transit projects should be part of an existing system or have independent utility.

³ Transit means any new or existing bus and rail mass transit systems, passenger rail, and all activities and structures useful and incident to providing, operating, and maintaining the same.

- iv. Transit service for the proposed project should satisfy at least two of following:
 - a) cross a county border;
 - b) directly serve a major regional employment or activity center;
 - c) carry a forecasted average 4,000 weekday boardings upon opening; and/or
 - d) connect to an existing or under construction fixed guideway facility as defined by FTA.
- v. Transit projects should serve areas with land use ordinances that enable increased development densities around stops and stations.

i. Transit Operations and Maintenance

Any funding must first preserve the existing regional transit service. After the existing service is addressed, operations and maintenance funding from the regional sales tax would then be allocated to new transit projects. Existing regional service is defined as the transit service in operation in the Atlanta Region as of January 1, 2011 (consistent with the Transportation Investment Act or any amendments) that satisfies at least two of following: (1) crosses a county border; (2) directly serves a major regional employment or activity center; (3) carries an average of 4,000 weekday boardings; and/or (4) connects to an existing or under construction fixed guideway facility as defined by FTA.

APPENDIX A: Illustrative Investment Guidelines

The table below serves only as a guide as to how investments can be allocated to meet the goals of the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan:

Program Areas	Investment Guidelines (%)	Illustrative Estimate Over 10 Years Based on Draft Economic Projections⁴, (\$)
Roadway Capital	20% - 50%	\$1.5 - \$3.7 Billion
Roadway & Bridge Maintenance (Asset Management)	0% - 10%	\$0 - \$740 Million
Safety and Traffic Operations	5% - 15%	\$37 Million - \$1.1 Billion
Freight & Logistics	0% - 5%	\$0 - \$370 Million
Aviation	0% - 5%	\$0 - \$370 Million
Bicycle and Pedestrian	1% - 5%	\$74 - \$370 Million
Transit Capital	10% - 40%	\$74 Million - \$3.0 Billion
Transit Operations & Maintenance	5% - 20%	\$37 Million - \$1.5 Billion

⁴ These numbers may change based on the final projections to be provided by the State Economist.

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Guiding Principles

COMMENT	RESPONSE
All projects from the long-range regional transportation plan, transportation improvement program, statewide transportation improvement program, and the Atlanta region's transit vision, Concept 3, should be eligible and should be included on the example investment list.	There is a balance between deliverability, strategy, and support. The Transportation Investment Act is expected to generate less revenue than the total cost of all projects in such plans and programs over the 10 years. The criteria help ensure the limited funds will be invested in strategic projects that have popular support and can be delivered within the 10-year time frame of the regional sales tax.
The criteria should explicitly include a call by the Planning Director for the submission to the regional round table, as part of the Unconstrained Example Investment List, all projects on existing transportation plans and all projects submitted by MPOs, regional commissions and local governments in each region.	While there will be no formal call for projects, local governments and MPOs will have an opportunity to identify their priorities.
Projects that are not from existing plans or studies but that have public support or local government council or board approval should be eligible and should be included on the example investment list.	Limiting projects to those from existing plans or studies indicates a level of prior public scrutiny and support. Such projects are more likely to be strategic, supported, and deliverable.
Add livability to the guiding principles.	Livability principles are embedded in the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan and ARC's Plan 2040. Therefore, there will be projects on the list that include livability aspects.
Use the five Plan 2040 objectives ARC has adopted to guide the development of a regional goal and subsequent performance goals.	As stated in the guiding principles, the investment list will be consistent with the policies of the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan and Plan 2040 in the Atlanta Special Tax District.
Add "Maximizing the value of Georgia's existing transportation assets" as a guiding principle.	The performance goals have been identified as the four strategic goals set by the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan, which include "Maximizing the value of Georgia's existing transportation assets."
Regional equity should be a factor in determining the project list.	Regional equity is a key provision of the Transportation Investment Act. Each county has equal representation (i.e., the county commission chair and one mayor from a city within the county) and equal votes on its special district's Regional Transportation Roundtable. (An exception is made for a county that has more than 90 percent of its population residing in cities. Such a county will have one additional representative.) The Roundtable approves the Final Investment List by majority vote.

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Investment Criteria Framework

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
The revised Draft Criteria due November 15 th should include the performance goals called for in the Transportation Investment Act.	The performance goals as adopted in the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan are included in the final recommended criteria.
Performance metrics and public benefit analysis should be made available for public comment at same time as allocation ranges and qualitative screening criteria.	Performance measures and expected public benefits will be provided along with the Unconstrained Example Investment List.
There is a need to preserve the roundtable's flexibility (e.g., by removing priority tiers).	Criteria are required by the Transportation Investment Act, are designed to frame the discussion, and should address deliverability, strategy, and support while retaining flexibility.
Will analysis of performance goals and public benefit be prepared by GDOT alone, or will the Roundtable have input into this as well?	The Transportation Investment Act requires the Planning Director to provide the expected public benefits along with the Draft Constrained Investment List. The Planning Director may solicit input from the Roundtable at his discretion.
A revised framework for the investment criteria should start with (1) evaluating project performance, (2) then establishing project mix (program allocation), and (3) finally checking deliverability.	This has already been done. The Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan evaluated a number of programs (e.g., arterial capacity projects, HOT lanes, employment center transit circulators) as well as a number of program "portfolios" (e.g., mostly transit, mostly roads, a mix of roads and transit) to determine which would perform best at various levels of funding. The best performing portfolio was used as the starting point in the development of the draft investment allocation target ranges.

Allocation Target Ranges

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
<p>We received many comments on the draft investment allocation target ranges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ranges are too restrictive and should be eliminated; • The ranges are too broad; • Increase the minimum range level above zero to ensure funding for each program; • Combine programs; • "Special tax district funds should be prioritized to offset funding limitations in other areas" by funding the transit, safety, non-motorized, etc. as much as possible; • Consider allocation ranges based upon expected benefits of programs • Roadway Capital should have the highest percentage; • Reduce Roadway Capital funding; • Increase Transit Capital funding; • Reduce Transit Capital funding; • Increase Transit O&M funding; • Increase Safety funding; • Decrease Safety funding; • Increase Traffic Operations funding; • Eliminate Non-Motorized funding; • Increase Freight & Logistics funding; • Increase Aviation funding; • Increase Roadway and Bridge Maintenance funding. 	<p>The draft investment criteria are designed to help the roundtables select projects for the Transportation Investment Act funding that can be delivered on time and that advance the state's and district's strategic transportation goals. The Transportation Investment Act requires that the Planning Director propose criteria based on performance, allocation, and execution.</p> <p>The intention of the criteria is to assist the roundtable in carrying on a discussion that is, in part, strategic and outcomes oriented. The roundtable members will have a good feel for the important projects in their respective jurisdictions. Investment allocation target ranges help begin the discussion of how much is appropriate to spend on the various transportation programs (e.g., new roadway capacity, new transit capacity, safety) to produce results throughout the region. The investment allocation target ranges highlight the tradeoffs associated with spending more or less in one program compared to the other programs. These allocation target ranges should be used in the development of the constrained Final Investment Lists from the Draft Unconstrained Investment Lists. (The allocation target ranges were not intended to be used to develop the Draft Unconstrained Investment Lists.)</p> <p>The draft target ranges were based initially on the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan, but constrained by other factors such as deliverability, availability of other fund sources, etc. They are generally quite broad, in recognition of the fact that the roundtables will have many factors to consider when developing the investment lists. They are meant to serve as a starting point for discussion and consideration by the roundtables.</p>

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COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Add Agricultural Commerce to Freight & Logistics.	This type of amendment may be worthwhile in several special districts. Every special district of the state has its own unique set of needs, and it may be a topic for discussion by the regional roundtables. We believe the Roadway Capital and Freight and Logistics program areas could suffice for projects related to agricultural commerce.
Passenger rail should be a program, even if it cannot be built in the 10 years. The sales tax could still pay for preliminary engineering, etc.	Engineering and construction for passenger rail could be eligible in the Transit Capital program.
Need a program focused on natural disasters, acts of god, emergencies.	A detailed project list must be developed on which the public will vote. It is unclear how projects focused on natural disasters, acts of god, and emergencies could be specified before such events occur, and "lump sum" funds reserved for projects to be identified after the vote are not allowed.
Change Non-Motorized to "Complete Streets" or Bicycle and Pedestrian.	The term "Complete Streets" is still relatively new and has not made its way into common everyday language among the general public. Rather than using this term, the program title has been changed to Bicycle and Pedestrian. The purpose of this change is to clarify to the voting public the types of projects included in this program.
Change Roadway Capital to "Roadway and Bridge Capital."	New or widened bridges are included in the Roadway Capital program.
Need an additional program for projects of National, Statewide and Cross-regional significance.	National, statewide, and cross-regional projects are eligible within other programs. The Transportation Investment Act requires that funds raised within a special district be spent within the special district, therefore in order to fund projects that cross more than one district, an allocation formula would need to be developed between the districts or other funding sources utilized.
Increase bicycle and pedestrian funding.	The lower end in the investment allocation target range for this program has been increased to one percent (1%) to enable taxpayers that do not drive to benefit from the regional sales tax.
Combine programs to increase flexibility.	The final draft criteria include a change to consolidate Safety and Traffic Operations into a single program. These programs have significant enough overlap to warrant the change.

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General Screening Criteria Comments

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
The screening criteria should prioritize public-private partnership (P3) projects or other projects that can leverage other funding sources (CIDs, etc.)	P3 projects are an important part of the transportation solution in the state. However, P3 projects create practical difficulties for Transportation Investment Act funding given the length of time required for negotiations and resolving funding uncertainties. P3 projects are eligible.
A criterion should be established for each program that provides consideration for projects that have no other funding source.	While funding availability is an important consideration for developing the Unconstrained Example Investment List, other factors such as strategic goals, deliverability, public appeal, and performance will be considered as well.
It seems as though Transit Capital projects are being held to a higher standard than Roadway Capital projects.	Several changes have been made to the criteria to address this issue. A new section has been added that applies to all programs equally, including Roadway Capital and Transit Capital. However, these two modes of transportation are inherently different and therefore still require their own unique criteria.
The definition of "regional transit" needs to be reevaluated. The multi-county requirement is too restrictive.	Changes have been made to expand and clarify the definition of regional transit. Regional transit need not cross a county border as long as it possesses at least two of the four key attributes identified in the final recommended criteria.
The criteria should be tailored to each region's unique needs.	Each region will have its own criteria.
Criteria should focus upon needs, not wants of the region and incorporate LOS, current/projected traffic counts, crash data, industrial & economic growth, etc.	The criteria may be altered by the Regional Transportation Roundtables to better reflect each Special District's specific needs. Performance measures will be released along with the Unconstrained Example Investment List and may include measures like LOS and crash data.
Economic development criteria should be included in the screening analysis for project selection.	Economic development was a prime consideration in the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan, and the project list will be developed with consideration given to economic development goals.
Screening criteria allocates 75% of funds almost exclusively to "STIP" projects, which essentially are state maintained facilities. Locals (outside of the Atlanta Special District) should not be expected to make due with 25% of funds.	The criteria are not limited to STIP projects. The intention of the criteria is to assist the roundtable in carrying on a discussion that is, in part, strategic and outcomes oriented. The roundtable members will have a good feel for the important projects in their respective

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COMMENTS	RESPONSES
	jurisdictions.
Criteria refer to eligible projects as those "throughout the region." Does this apply to roads providing connectivity to another region?	Yes. Roads providing connectivity to another region are considered potentially part of those "throughout the region."
Use a different word than "tiers," as this is a term used by DCA for tax credit allocations.	This criterion has been rewritten, and this will no longer be an issue.

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Roadway Capital Criteria

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
More than just construction phases should be funded with the regional sales tax funds.	The criteria allow for phases other than construction to be funded, however the emphasis should be placed on construction. It is critical that projects are built, and the value of the sales tax is visible to each district's citizenry during the 10-year life of the regional sales tax.
In the Metro Atlanta special district, the connectivity of the regional road network should be given emphasis (i.e. cross-regional connectivity or inter- and intra-regional connectivity).	Roadway capital projects that are among the most congested regional corridors as determined through ARC's Congestion Management Process will improve regional connectivity and are eligible per the draft criteria.
Congestion should be the main criterion for roadway capital projects.	Congestion is an important factor; however the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan identifies other important factors, such as reliable trips, access to employment centers, and safety. Project deliverability and funding commitment are also important, and all of these factors should be considered when developing the Final Investment List.
The tiers are too restrictive and should be revised.	The tiers have been replaced by the criterion, applicable to all programs, that project phases funded by Transportation Investment Act funds should be completed within ten years of the start of the regional sales tax. Project phases that are not expected to be completed within the ten-year life of the sales tax should not be included in the Unconstrained Example Investment List.
What constitutes a major activity or employment center?	In the Atlanta special district, major employment and activity centers are Regional Centers and Regional Town Centers as defined in ARC's PLAN 2040 Regional Development Guide. In all other special districts, major employment and activity centers may be identified at the discretion of the respective roundtables.

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Safety and Traffic Operations Criteria

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
The criteria should document reductions in crash frequency or severity based on the Highway Safety Manual.	Reductions in crash frequency and/or severity are important. The specific safety related performance measure(s) will be released along with the Unconstrained Example Investment List.
Intersection improvements should be prioritized in the safety program. Criteria should include analysis of pedestrian crossings on state routes.	Both of these project types are important, and they are both eligible to receive funding under the Safety and Traffic Operations program. The performance measures used to select projects will be released along with the Unconstrained Example Investment List.

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Bicycle and Pedestrian Criteria (formerly Non-Motorized Criteria)

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Not all bicycle and pedestrian plans will result in a list of projects. Therefore, the criterion should be reworded to reflect that projects should be consistent with these plans rather than identified within them.	Both of these suggestions help clarify the intent of the criteria; therefore, they have been included in the final draft.
The criterion requiring connectivity to regional activity centers should also be inclusive of projects within said areas.	
Eliminate the notation that off-roadway and streetscape projects should be funded by local disbursements.	<p>The notation has been revised; however, there are still distinctions made as to what should be funded with the regional sales tax funds. Mention of off-roadway paths has been eliminated and replaced with "recreational paths." The purpose of this change is to reflect that off-roadway paths may serve a regional commuting purpose. The distinction between an off-roadway path and a recreational path is based upon the path's ability to be utilized year-round at all times of the day. For example, a path which is not lit for use at dusk or nighttime would be considered a recreational path.</p> <p>Additionally, the reference to streetscapes has been replaced with the term "landscaping." As a distinction, streetscape projects may enhance the width of sidewalks, add landscaping, traffic buffers, street furniture, etc. These items as a whole establish an environment which may promote increased pedestrian usage of existing or expanded facilities. Landscaping projects are often a component of a streetscaping project that utilized alone may not promote the usage of the alternative mode facility, if such a facility is present.</p>

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Aviation Criteria

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Allow funds to be awarded to both commercial and non-commercial airports.	This criterion has been revised to reflect this comment in recognition of the commercial and non-commercial dual purpose many airports serve across the state.

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11/8/2010

Roadway and Bridge Maintenance Criteria

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Expand focus beyond regional employment centers.	For purposes of consistency with the criteria in other programs, the criterion has been re-worded to include major activity centers.
Eliminate the prioritization of funds toward state routes or routes connecting regional employment centers.	<p>These funds, should they be approved by special district voters, are intended to be utilized in the advancement of strategic projects that may have the greatest impact on the region. The resurfacing of primarily local routes should be funded by local disbursements of the sales tax or other funding source.</p> <p>Please note, an additional criterion has been added to the program which specifically addresses bridge maintenance and replacement. Because of the cost associated with these types of improvements and their importance to the safety and well-being of motorists, there is not a specific restriction based upon route types which limit eligibility.</p>
Agricultural roadways designated as Tier 1 and Tier 2 facilities by the Department of Community Affairs should be included as being eligible for maintenance funds.	This type of amendment to the criteria may be worthwhile in several special districts. Every special district of the state has its own unique set of needs, and it may be a topic for discussion by the regional roundtables.

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Transit Capital Criteria

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
What exactly does transit encompass?	Transit is defined in the Transportation Investment Act as any new or existing bus and rail mass transit system(s), passenger rail, and all activities and structures useful and incident to providing, operating, and maintaining the same.
What items are covered under Transit Capital?	Per the criteria, items covered under Transit capital include “new, systematic replacement, upgrades, refurbishment, and other capital project expenditures.”
What project phases are covered under Transit Capital?	There is an emphasis being placed upon the construction phase or acquisition of capital equipment; however, the criterion now more clearly states that other phases of project delivery are eligible for funding as well.
It seems as though Transit Capital projects are being treated differently and to a higher standard than Roadway Capital projects.	Several changes have been made to the criteria to address this issue. A new section has been added that applies to all programs equally, including Roadway Capital and Transit Capital. However, these two modes of transportation are inherently different and therefore also require their own unique criteria.
The tiers are too restrictive and should be revised.	The tiers have been replaced by the criterion, applicable to all programs, that project phases funded by Transportation Investment Act funds should be completed within ten years of the start of the regional sales tax. Project phases that are not expected to be completed within the ten-year life of the sales tax should not be included in the Unconstrained Example Investment List.

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Transit Operations and Maintenance Criteria

COMMENTS	RESPONSES
Precluding expansion in favor of maintenance could eliminate some popular and effective transit projects from moving forward.	This criterion does not prohibit funding new transit service. It states that funds should be allocated to preserving existing service before the operation and maintenance of new service. Therefore, if a regional roundtable were to dedicate enough funds to transit operations and maintenance, it may be possible to fund existing as well as new or expanded transit services.
Eliminate the definition of "core" transit service as a system of service in place as of January 1, 2011; Eliminate reference to funding ineligibility for MARTA services in place as of the same date.	The term "core" has been removed from the final recommended criteria. The definition of existing transit service (i.e., in operation as of January 1, 2011) has been retained. In the case of the Atlanta special district, the definition of regional transit has been expanded to include four key attributes, at least two of which should be satisfied in order for the service to qualify for Transportation Investment Act Transit Operations and Maintenance funds. The limitations on funding MARTA operations are contained in the Transportation Investment Act. However, the draft criteria have been altered so that they reference the Transportation Investment Act rather than use the specific Transportation Investment Act language. If the legislature amends the Transportation Investment Act in the future to remove these limitations, MARTA would be eligible for operations and maintenance funds under the revised criteria.

Adopted by the Atlanta Roundtable, 12/17/10

REGIONAL CRITERIA FOR THE ATLANTA 10-COUNTY SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT

- These Regional Criteria for development of an investment list of projects and programs were developed based on the Final Recommended Criteria from the GDOT Director of Planning, 11/8/10, and refined by Roundtable Members during recent Conference Calls. Content changes are underscored.
- The Regional Criteria do not apply to the 15% Local Share to be distributed by formula to cities and counties.

Framework for the Atlanta Region Investment Criteria

Definitions:

- Unconstrained Example Investment List – an example list of projects that comport with approved criteria developed by the Director of Planning; list does not have to be fiscally constrained.
- Constrained *Draft* Investment List – developed from the Unconstrained Example Investment List by the Roundtable’s Executive Committee in collaboration with the Director of Planning; list is fiscally constrained by the projected revenue of a 10-year sales tax.
- Constrained *Final* investment List – developed from the Constrained *Draft* Investment List (and amended with projects from the Unconstrained Example Investment List, if needed) by the Roundtable and approved; list is fiscally constrained by the projected revenue of a 10-year sales tax and deliverable within the 10 year timeframe.
- Discretionary Funds- 15% of all revenue collected by the sales tax will be redistributed to the counties and cities within the region using the LARP factor (a combination of population and lane miles). Each jurisdiction will determine how to spend these dollars. Projects are not subject to the criteria or the Roundtable’s approval. However, these projects will play an important role in the public’s approval of a regional sales tax.

Process:

- After the criteria are approved by the Roundtable, the Director of Planning, in collaboration with ARC and local jurisdictions, will develop the Unconstrained Example Investment List by evaluating the extent to which submitted projects satisfy the approved screening criteria.
- Projects that meet the criteria, align with the SSTP and PLAN 2040, area currently listed in an approved plan and can be delivered within the timeframe of the regional sales tax will be eligible for inclusion on the Unconstrained Example Investment List.
- Next, the Director of Planning will determine the specific public benefits to be expected upon the completion of each project on the Unconstrained Example Investment List and assess how each project furthers the goals of the Atlanta region’s investment criteria. A number of performance

Adopted by the Atlanta Roundtable, 12/17/10

measures will be used to evaluate each project's contribution. Metrics from the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan and Plan 2040 will be used to determine the public benefit for each project. The performance measures and public benefits will be provided along with the Unconstrained Example Investment List to the Roundtable and the Executive Committee. These are intended to assist the Executive Committee and the Roundtable in selecting the best projects and provide the region's citizens a solid evaluation of the use of their sales tax dollars.

- The Executive Committee in collaboration with the Director of Planning will use all this information and extensive public feedback to create the Constrained Draft Investment List from the Unconstrained Example Investment List (due to the Roundtable no later than August 15, 2011). The law only requires two public hearings, but it is the intention of the Atlanta Roundtable to do extensive public outreach including polling and public forums throughout this process.
- The Roundtable may also use this information to amend the Constrained Draft Investment List with projects from the Unconstrained Example Investment List to create the Final Investment List (Roundtable must approve by October 15, 2011).
- Finally, if the regional sales tax referendum is approved by the voters of a special district, the Director of Planning will track and report on the funding, execution, and performance of the projects in the district's Constrained Final Investment List.

Final Recommended Criteria for the Atlanta 10-County Special Tax District

- I. The project list should support the **performance goals** of the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan:
 - Support Georgia’s economic growth and competitiveness.
 - Ensure safety and security.
 - Maximize the value of Georgia’s assets, getting the most out of the existing network.
 - Minimize the impact on the environment.

- II. The project list should achieve the following **outcomes**:
 - Achieve the best value for taxpayers' dollars and improve the region’s transportation network.
 - Transportation projects¹ delivered on time and on budget.
 - Public support for projects funded by the regional sales tax and public trust that state and local governments will deliver on their promises.
 - Investments should improve regional mobility.

- III. The project list development should be guided by the following **principles**:
 - Investment list is developed with a focus on deliverability.
 - Projects should come from existing plans and/or studies (for example, the GDOT work program, ARC long range plan and short range program, ARC Congestion Management Process, county transportation studies, etc.).
 - Investment list is consistent with the policies of the SSTP and policies of the Atlanta Region’s PLAN 2040.
 - Investment list encourages effective multimodal solutions that appeal to a broad spectrum of the region’s citizens and address the region’s rapidly growing older adult population.

¹ “Project” means, without limitation, any new or existing airports, bike lanes, bridges, bus and rail mass transit systems, freight and passenger rail, pedestrian facilities, ports, roads, terminals, and all activities and structures useful and incident to providing, operating, and maintaining the same. The term shall also include direct appropriations to a local government for the purpose of serving as a local match for state or federal funding.

- The project list should demonstrate regional equity in order to ensure it attracts the support of voters from the entire region. Regional equity will be measured by the outcomes of specific projects not the dollar amounts spent on projects in specific jurisdictions.
- Both the unconstrained and final list of projects may include “packaged projects” that address connectivity issues for the regional transportation network. These projects can include, but are not limited to, last mile connectivity, bicycle, pedestrian safety and capital resurfacing and rehabilitation projects.
- The criteria are designed to create a list of projects that have public support, can be delivered, and produce results for the citizens. The criteria are intended to be interpreted with enough flexibility to achieve these objectives and to create an overall list that is supported by the roundtable and the citizens of the region.

IV. Projects will be evaluated by the following **criteria**:

a. Applicable to All Program Areas

- i. Emphasis will be on the construction phase or acquisition of capital equipment; however project phases other than construction can be included in the Unconstrained Example Investment List. Preference will be given for preliminary engineering, right-of-way, and environmental reviews which ultimately deliver a construction project within the 10-year sales tax period.
- ii. Each project phase included in the investment list, and each phase necessary to complete the same, regardless of funding source, must demonstrate full funding. For projects with preliminary engineering and/or right-of-way funded by Transportation Investment Act revenue, construction funds must be shown in the Atlanta region’s long range transportation plan adopted by ARC.
- iii. Emphasis will be on delivery. All project phases funded with Transportation Investment Act revenue should be able to be completed or underway within ten years. The Director of Planning recommends that approximately 40% of the total expected Transportation Investment Act funding should be allocated to project phases that could be completed or underway within six years of the start of the regional sales tax, and the remaining funds should be allocated to projects that could be completed or underway within ten years of the start of the regional sales tax. (Excludes 15% discretionary local share to be distributed by formula to cities and counties.)

b. Roadway Capital

The projects that qualify under “roadway capital” serve origins or destinations of trips to/from and within major existing and proposed employment and activity centers throughout the region.² Qualified roadway capital projects should improve the most congested regional corridors as determined through ARC’s Congestion Management Process, Regional Strategic Transportation System and Regional Thoroughfare Network. These projects could be new roads, roadway widenings, interchanges, interstate improvements, bridges, etc.

c. Roadway and Bridge Maintenance (asset management)

- i. Priority for resurfacing/rehabilitation needs are for facilities on the Regional Strategic Transportation System developed by the ARC, with emphasis on connecting major regional employment or activity centers. Priority will be based on risk and on PACES ratings provided by GDOT. (Note: Off-system resurfacing should be pursued using the 15% discretionary share.)
- ii. Bridge maintenance and replacement shall be determined based on ratings provided by GDOT.

d. Safety and Traffic Operations

- i. Safety
 - a) Projects that align with the key emphasis areas of the Governor’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP).
 - b) Priority is given to projects that correct or improve a road location or feature with high potential for safety improvement, or addresses a specific highway safety deficiency. The objective of each project must be to reduce fatalities and serious injuries.
 - c) Projects may include intersection improvements to address safety concerns, shoulder widenings, pedestrian/bicycle safety improvements, hazard eliminations at rail-roadway crossings, traffic calming measures, installation of guardrails, crash attenuators, traffic signal upgrades, signage, and pavement marking improvement projects, etc.
- ii. Traffic Operations
 - a) Projects that improve or enhance the region’s intelligent transportation system network, incident management program, or signal coordination and timing.
 - b) Projects addressing an existing operational issue resulting in an improved level of service or reduction in delay or other congestion costs.

² Major regional employment and activity centers are Region Centers and Regional Town Centers as defined in ARC’s PLAN 2040 Regional Development Guide.

e. Freight and Logistics

- i. Projects that address the demand for goods movement into, out of, and within the state as identified through the Statewide Freight and Logistics Study (ongoing), the Atlanta Regional Freight Mobility Plan and the Atlanta Strategic Truck Route Master Plan adopted by the ARC.
- ii. Projects that enhance the flow of freight transported by trucks and/or rail.
- iii. Projects that facilitate the transfer of freight between modes.

f. Aviation

- i. Projects at new or existing airports that are contained in the airport's 5-year Airport Capital Improvement Program submitted annually to GDOT and FAA. The types of projects included in this area are runways, taxiways, aprons, and navigational aids.
- ii. Projects consistent with the goals and objectives of Georgia's Statewide Aviation System Plan.

g. Bicycle and Pedestrian

- i. Projects consistent with the Atlanta Region's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
- ii. Projects that provide connectivity to/from or within a major regional employment or activity center.
- iii. Projects that provide connection to/from existing or planned transit including bus stops and multi-modal centers.

(Note: Projects such as landscaping and recreational paths should be pursued using the 15% discretionary share.)

h. Transit³ Capital

- i. To comply with the Transportation Investment Act Section 7, the highest consideration will be given to the projects that are most highly prioritized by ARC (in conjunction with the Director of Planning and GRTA) per economic benefit, lowest environmental impact, and completion of environmental permitting (O.C.G.A. 50-32-5 (f)). Capital expenditures may include new, systematic replacement, upgrades, refurbishment, and other capital project expenditures.
- ii. New fixed guideway facilities should also include a 20-year operating plan. Funds for the operations may come from any identified source including Transportation Investment Act transit operation funds and its authorized reserves under O.C.G.A. 48-8-241(c).
- iii. Transit projects should be part of an existing system or have independent utility.

³ Transit means any new or existing bus and rail mass transit systems, passenger rail, and all activities and structures useful and incident to providing, operating, and maintaining the same.

- iv. Transit service for the proposed project should satisfy at least two of following:
 - a) cross a county border;
 - b) directly serve a major regional employment or activity center;
 - c) carry a forecasted average 4,000 weekday boardings upon opening; and/or
 - d) connect to an existing or under construction fixed guideway facility as defined by FTA.
- v. Transit projects should serve areas with land use ordinances that enable increased development densities around stops and stations.

i. Transit Operations and Maintenance

Any funding must first preserve the existing regional transit service. After the existing service is addressed, operations and maintenance funding from the regional sales tax would then be allocated to new transit projects. Existing regional service is defined as the transit service in operation in the Atlanta Region as of January 1, 2011 (consistent with the Transportation Investment Act or any amendments) that satisfies at least two of following: (1) crosses a county border; (2) directly serves a major regional employment or activity center; (3) carries an average of 4,000 weekday boardings; and/or (4) connects to an existing or under construction fixed guideway facility as defined by FTA.

APPENDIX A: Illustrative Investment Guidelines

The table below serves only as a guide as to how investments can be allocated to meet the goals of the Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan:

Program Areas	Investment Guidelines (%)	Illustrative Estimate Over 10 Years Based on Draft Economic Projections⁴, (\$)
Roadway Capital	20% - 50%	\$1.5 - \$3.7 Billion
Roadway & Bridge Maintenance (Asset Management)	0% - 10%	\$0 - \$740 Million
Safety and Traffic Operations	5% - 15%	\$37 Million - \$1.1 Billion
Freight & Logistics	0% - 5%	\$0 - \$370 Million
Aviation	0% - 5%	\$0 - \$370 Million
Bicycle and Pedestrian	1% - 5%	\$74 - \$370 Million
Transit Capital	10% - 40%	\$74 Million - \$3.0 Billion
Transit Operations & Maintenance	5% - 20%	\$37 Million - \$1.5 Billion

⁴ These numbers may change based on the final projections to be provided by the State Economist.

Appendix D

FINAL PROJECT LIST

The following pages include the approved project list for the Atlanta region.

Appendix A - Final Investment List

(Approved by Atlanta Region Transportation Investment Act (TIA) Roundtable - October 13, 2011 - all costs shown are in 2011 dollars)

Project ID	Project Name	Project Type	Subregion	Jurisdiction	TIA Funds Committed	Federal Funds Committed	Local Funds Committed (see note 1)	Total Funding Commitment
TIA-AR-030	I-285 North at SR 400 - Interchange Improvements	Roadway	I-285 Corridor	Fulton	\$ 112,500,000	\$ 337,500,000	\$ -	\$ 450,000,000
TIA-AR-037	MARTA North Heavy Rail Line Extension to SR 140 - Project Development Activities	Transit	North Subregion	Fulton	\$ 37,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 37,000,000
TIA-AR-040	I-85 North at I-285 - Interchange Improvements	Roadway	I-285 Corridor	DeKalb	\$ 26,500,000	\$ 26,500,000	\$ -	\$ 53,000,000
TIA-AR-041	GRTA Xpress System - Operations and Capital Funding for Existing Services	Transit	Regional	Regional	\$ 95,000,000	\$ 33,000,000	\$ -	\$ 128,000,000
TIA-AR-044	Regional Mobility Call Center and Enhanced Transportation Services for Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities	Transit	Regional	Regional	\$ 17,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 17,000,000
TIA-AR-046	I-285 West at I-20 West - Interchange Improvements	Roadway	I-285 Corridor	Fulton	\$ 74,500,000	\$ 74,500,000	\$ -	\$ 149,000,000
TIA-AT-001(14)	Pryor Street at CSX Rail Line and MARTA East Line - Bridge Replacement	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 32,100,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 32,100,000
TIA-AT-001(4)	Central Avenue at CSX Rail Line and MARTA East Line - Bridge Replacement	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 27,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 27,000,000
TIA-AT-001(40)	Piedmont Avenue from Cheshire Bridge Road to Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive - Multimodal Corridor Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 3,604,908	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,604,908
TIA-AT-001(47)	10th Street from Howell Mill Road to Monroe Drive - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 462,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 462,500
TIA-AT-001(48)	14th Street from Howell Mill Road to Piedmont Road - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 575,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 575,000
TIA-AT-001(49)	Auburn Avenue from Peachtree Street to Boulevard - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 643,750	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 643,750
TIA-AT-001(5)	Courtland Street at CSX Rail Line and MARTA East Line - Bridge Replacement	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 22,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 22,000,000
TIA-AT-001(50)	Boulevard from US 78 (Ponce de Leon Avenue) to SR 42 Spur (McDonough Boulevard) - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 1,150,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,150,000
TIA-AT-001(51)	Courtland Street from Linden Avenue to Gilmer Street - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 750,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 750,000
TIA-AT-001(52)	US 78 (Donald L. Hollowell Parkway) from SR 70 (Fulton Industrial Boulevard) to US 41 (Northside Drive) - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 1,025,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,025,000
TIA-AT-001(53)	Edgewood Avenue from Peachtree Street to Elizabeth Street - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 527,667	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 527,667
TIA-AT-001(54)	Howell Mill Road from I-75 North to 10th Street - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 512,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 512,500

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Project ID	Project Name	Project Type	Subregion	Jurisdiction	TIA Funds Committed	Federal Funds Committed	Local Funds Committed (see note 1)	Total Funding Commitment
TIA-AT-001(55)	Joseph E. Lowery Boulevard from West Marietta Street to SR 139 (Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard) - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 1,188,750	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,188,750
TIA-AT-001(56)	Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive from Fairburn Road to Washington Street - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 3,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,000,000
TIA-AT-001(57)	SR 154 (Memorial Drive) from Peachtree Street to SR 155 (Candler Road) - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 738,750	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 738,750
TIA-AT-001(58)	Monroe Drive from Piedmont Circle to US 78/278 (Ponce de Leon Avenue) - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 706,250	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 706,250
TIA-AT-001(59)	North Avenue from US 41 (Northside Drive) to US 23 (Moreland Avenue) - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 457,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 457,500
TIA-AT-001(60)	US 19/41 (Northside Drive) from West Paces Ferry Road to Whitehall Street - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 525,325	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 525,325
TIA-AT-001(61)	SR 9 / SR 141 (Peachtree Road) from Peachtree Dunwoody Road to Collier Road - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 1,713,450	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,713,450
TIA-AT-001(62)	Peachtree Street from Spring Street to SR 154 (Trinity Avenue) - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 434,875	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 434,875
TIA-AT-001(63)	SR 237 (Piedmont Road/Avenue) from SR 9 (Roswell Road) to Edgewood Avenue - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 612,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 612,000
TIA-AT-001(64)	US 78/278 (Ponce de Leon Avenue) from Spring Street to Clifton Road - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 618,125	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 618,125
TIA-AT-001(65)	Spring Street from Peachtree Street to SR 154 (Trinity Avenue) - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 1,292,125	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,292,125
TIA-AT-001(66)	SR 139 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive) from SR 280 (H.E. Holmes Drive) to Lamar Avenue - Multimodal Corridor Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 7,395,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,395,000
TIA-AT-001(67)	Campbellton Road from SR 139 (Lee Street) to Atlanta City Limits - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 1,259,900	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,259,900
TIA-AT-001(68)	SR 54 (Jonesboro Road) from McDonough Boulevard to City Limits - Traffic Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 806,625	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 806,625
TIA-AT-004	Atlanta Beltline and Atlanta Streetcar Transit and Trail - Downtown to Northeast	Transit	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 165,952,132	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 165,952,132
TIA-AT-007	Atlanta Beltline and Atlanta Streetcar Transit and Trail - Downtown and Midtown to Southwest	Transit	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 435,940,345	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 435,940,345
TIA-AT-010	I-285 West at Greenbriar Parkway - New Interchange	Roadway	I-285 Corridor	Atlanta	\$ 36,400,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 36,400,000

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TIA-AT-021A	SR 237 / SR 9 between Atlanta City Limits and Lindbergh MARTA Station - Bus Rapid Transit and Road Improvements	Roadway/Transit	Central Subregion	Atlanta	\$ 50,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000,000
TIA-CH-001	Bells Ferry Road at Little River - Bridge Replacement	Roadway	Northwest Subregion	Cherokee	\$ 7,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,000,000
TIA-CH-005	SR 140 (Hickory Flat Highway) from East Cherokee Drive to Mountain Road - Widening	Roadway	North Subregion	Cherokee	\$ 70,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 70,000,000
TIA-CH-006	SR 140 (Hickory Flat Highway) from I-575 to East Cherokee Drive - Widening	Roadway	North Subregion	Cherokee	\$ 70,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 70,000,000
TIA-CH-009	SR 140 (Hickory Flat Highway / Arnold Mill Road) from Mountain Road to Fulton County Line - Widening	Roadway	North Subregion	Cherokee	\$ 50,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000,000
TIA-CL-002	Atlanta to Griffin Commuter Rail - Region 3 (Fulton, Clayton and Henry Counties)	Transit	South Subregion	Clayton	\$ 20,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000,000
TIA-CL-004	Conley Road from I-285 to SR 54 (Jonesboro Road) - Widening	Roadway	South Subregion	Clayton	\$ 28,500,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 28,500,000
TIA-CL-005	Jonesboro Connector from US 19/41 (Tara Boulevard) to Lake Jodeco Road - New Alignment	Roadway	South Subregion	Clayton	\$ 15,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 15,000,000
TIA-CL-006	Clayton County Local Bus / Fixed Route Transit Service	Transit	South Subregion	Clayton	\$ 100,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 100,000,000
TIA-CL-012	SR 54 (Fayetteville Road) from McDonough Road in Fayette County to US 19/41 (Tara Boulevard) in Clayton County - Widening	Roadway	South Subregion	Clayton/Fayette	\$ 8,100,000	\$ 32,080,000	\$ -	\$ 40,180,000
TIA-CL-013	SR 85 from Adams Drive to I-75 South (includes interchange) - Widening	Roadway	South Subregion	Clayton	\$ 17,200,000	\$ 16,950,000	\$ -	\$ 34,150,000
TIA-CL-014	SR 85 from Pointe South Parkway to Roberts Drive - Widening	Roadway	South Subregion	Clayton	\$ 22,200,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 22,200,000
TIA-CL-018	US 19/41 (Tara Boulevard) from I-75 South to Battle Creek Road - Super Arterial Concept	Roadway	South Subregion	Clayton	\$ 102,170,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 102,170,000
TIA-CO-001	Busbee Frey Connector from Busbee Parkway to Frey Road - New Alignment	Roadway	Northwest Subregion	Cobb	\$ 19,000,000	\$ -	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 21,500,000
TIA-CO-006	US 41 (Cobb Parkway) from Barrett Parkway to Bartow County - Intersection Improvements at Nine Locations	Roadway	Northwest Subregion	Cobb	\$ 9,800,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,800,000
TIA-CO-013	I-75 North at Windy Hill Road - Interchange Improvements	Roadway	Northwest Subregion	Cobb	\$ 47,000,000	\$ 30,000,000	\$ -	\$ 77,000,000

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TIA-CO-016	SR 360 (Macland Road) from Paulding County Line to New Macland Road / Lost Mountain Road - Widening	Roadway	Northwest Subregion	Cobb	\$ 14,500,000	\$ 15,500,000	\$ -	\$ 30,000,000
TIA-CO-018	McCollum Airport - New Air Traffic Control Tower	Aviation	Northwest Subregion	Cobb	\$ 2,500,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,500,000
TIA-CO-020	McCollum Airport - Runway Approach Lighting System	Aviation	Northwest Subregion	Cobb	\$ 690,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 690,000
TIA-CO-021	Moon Station Road at CSX Railroad - New Alignment and Overpass	Roadway	Northwest Subregion	Cobb	\$ 4,500,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,500,000
TIA-CO-024	River View Road from Nichols Drive to SR 280 (South Cobb Drive) - Corridor Improvements	Roadway	Northwest Subregion	Cobb	\$ 12,500,000	\$ -	\$ 4,000,000	\$ 16,500,000
TIA-CO-026	SR 120 (Roswell Road) from Bridgegate Drive to Timber Ridge Road - Safety and Operational Improvements	Roadway	Northwest Subregion	Cobb	\$ 20,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000,000
TIA-CO-027	SR 280 (South Cobb Drive) from I-285 to Church Road / Oakdale Road - Corridor Improvements	Roadway	Northwest Subregion	Cobb	\$ 9,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,000,000
TIA-CO-035	Enhanced Premium Transit Service - Acworth / Kennesaw / Town Center to MARTA Arts Center Station	Transit	Northwest Subregion	Cobb/Atlanta	\$ 689,000,000	\$ -	\$ 6,000,000	\$ 695,000,000
TIA-CO-037	Windy Hill Road / Terrell Mill Connector - New Alignment	Roadway	Northwest Subregion	Cobb	\$ 14,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 14,000,000
TIA-CO-043	US 41 (Cobb Parkway) at Windy Hill Road - Grade Separation	Roadway	Northwest Subregion	Cobb	\$ 89,500,000	\$ -	\$ 3,500,000	\$ 93,000,000
TIA-CO-045	SR 92 (Lake Acworth Drive) from US 41 (Cobb Parkway) to Cherokee Street - Widening	Roadway	Northwest Subregion	Cobb	\$ 29,100,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 29,100,000
TIA-CO-046	Windy Hill Road from SR 280 (South Cobb Drive) to US 41 (Cobb Parkway) - Widening and Operational Improvements	Roadway	Northwest Subregion	Cobb	\$ 22,999,900	\$ -	\$ 4,000,000	\$ 26,999,900
TIA-DK-007	Decatur to Clifton Corridor - Transit Connectivity and Safety Improvements	Bike/Ped	Central Subregion	DeKalb	\$ 5,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000
TIA-DK-014	Ashford Dunwoody Road from SR 141 (Peachtree Road) to I-285 North - Corridor Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	DeKalb	\$ 5,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000
TIA-DK-018	SR 13 (Buford Hwy) from Lenox Road to Shallowford Terrace - Pedestrian, Landscape and BRT Improvements	Bike/Ped	Central Subregion	DeKalb	\$ 12,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,000,000
TIA-DK-021	Clifton Road at CSX Railroad - Bridge Replacement and Associated Improvements to Haygood Road	Roadway	Central Subregion	DeKalb	\$ 25,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25,000,000

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TIA-DK-022	US 278 (College Avenue) from Adair Street to North Clarendon Avenue - Corridor Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	DeKalb	\$ 5,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000
TIA-DK-029	Glenwood Road from SR 155 (Candler Road) to US 278 (Covington Highway) - Corridor Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	DeKalb	\$ 5,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000
TIA-DK-030	Hayden Quarry Road / Sigman Road Extension from Turner Hill Road to I-20 East - New Alignment	Roadway	East Subregion	DeKalb/Rockdale	\$ 27,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 27,000,000
TIA-DK-033	North Indian Creek Drive from SR 10 (Memorial Drive) to Montreal Road - Corridor Improvements	Roadway	East Subregion	DeKalb	\$ 5,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000,000
TIA-DK-042	North Druid Hills Road from SR 13 (Buford Highway) to US 29 (Lawrenceville Highway) - Corridor Improvements	Roadway	Central Subregion	DeKalb	\$ 25,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25,000,000
TIA-DK-043	Panola Road from Thompson Mill Road to US 278 (Covington Highway) - Widening	Roadway	East Subregion	DeKalb	\$ 15,150,000	\$ 15,150,000	\$ -	\$ 30,300,000
TIA-DK-048	Rockbridge Road from SR 10 (Memorial Drive) to SR 124 (Rock Chapel Road) - Corridor Improvements	Roadway	East Subregion	DeKalb	\$ 7,500,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,500,000
TIA-DK-055	I-20 East at Panola Road - Interchange Improvements	Roadway	East Subregion	DeKalb	\$ 10,600,000	\$ 10,600,000	\$ -	\$ 21,200,000
TIA-DK-057	US 23 (Buford Hwy) / SR 141 (Peachtree Industrial Boulevard) Connector - New Alignment	Roadway	Central Subregion	DeKalb	\$ 25,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25,000,000
TIA-DK-059	Perimeter Center Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Program	Roadway	North Subregion	DeKalb	\$ 1,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000,000
TIA-DK-069	Mt Vernon Road from Fulton County Line to Dunwoody Club Drive - Corridor Improvements	Roadway	North Subregion	DeKalb	\$ 12,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,000,000
TIA-DO-002	I-20 West from I-285 West to SR 5 - ITS and Western Regional Traffic Control Center	Roadway	West Subregion	Douglas	\$ 9,500,000	\$ 9,500,000	\$ -	\$ 19,000,000
TIA-DO-003	SR 92 from Fairburn Road to Dallas Highway - Phases I, II and III Realignment	Roadway	West Subregion	Douglas	\$ 24,500,000	\$ 24,500,000	\$ -	\$ 49,000,000
TIA-DO-006	Lee Road / South Sweetwater Road from I-20 West to US 78 (Bankhead Highway) - Widening	Roadway	West Subregion	Douglas	\$ 18,900,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 18,900,000
TIA-DO-007	US 78 (Veterans Memorial Highway) from SR 6 (Thornton Road) to Sweetwater Road - Widening	Roadway	West Subregion	Douglas	\$ 20,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000,000
TIA-DO-009	Dorris Road Multiuse Path Phase 1 - Transportation Center to Prestley Mill Road	Bike/Ped	West Subregion	Douglas	\$ 650,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 650,000
TIA-DO-010	Dorris Road Multiuse Path Phase 2 - Prestley Mill Road from I-20 West to Slater Mill Road	Bike/Ped	West Subregion	Douglas	\$ 2,210,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,210,000
TIA-DO-018	SR 6 (Thornton Road) from Paulding County Line to Riverside Parkway - Truck Friendly Lanes, ITS, Intersection Improvements and Partial Widening	Roadway	West Subregion	Douglas/Cobb	\$ 43,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 43,000,000

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TIA-FA-003	East Fayetteville Bypass Segment 1 (South) from South Jeff Davis Road to SR 54 (East Lanier Avenue) - New Alignment and Widening	Roadway	South Subregion	Fayette	\$ 35,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 35,000,000
TIA-FA-004	East Fayetteville Bypass Segment 2 (North) from SR 54 (East Lanier Avenue) to SR 85 - New Alignment and Widening	Roadway	South Subregion	Fayette	\$ 14,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 14,000,000
TIA-FA-005	MacDuff Parkway Extension Phase 2 - New Alignment to Connect SR 54 to SR 74 - New Alignment	Roadway	Southwest Subregion	Fayette	\$ 6,400,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,400,000
TIA-FA-006	SR 85 Phase 1 from Bernhard Road to Grady Avenue - Widening	Roadway	Southwest Subregion	Fayette	\$ 12,000,000	\$ 12,000,000	\$ -	\$ 24,000,000
TIA-FA-010	South Industrial Park Path Connection	Bike/Ped	Southwest Subregion	Fayette	\$ 1,210,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,210,000
TIA-FA-013	SR 92 from Jimmy Mayfield Boulevard to McBride Road - Widening	Roadway	South Subregion	Fayette	\$ 15,900,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 15,900,000
TIA-FA-014	SR 85 from Bernhard Road to SR 74 - Operational Improvements	Roadway	Southwest Subregion	Fayette	\$ 5,900,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,900,000
TIA-FA-022	Southeast Industrial Park Path Connection	Bike/Ped	Southwest Subregion	Fayette	\$ 1,150,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,150,000
TIA-FA-026	SR 92 to SR 138 Connector - New Alignment from SR 138 in Fulton County to SR 92 in Fayette County	Roadway	Southwest Subregion	Fayette/Fulton	\$ 18,300,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 18,300,000
TIA-FA-028	SR 92 (Forrest Avenue) from SR 85 (Glynn Street) in Fayette County to Oakley Industrial Boulevard in Fulton County - Operational Improvements	Roadway	Southwest Subregion	Fayette	\$ 20,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000,000
TIA-FN-002	SR 120 (Kimball Bridge Road) from State Bridge Road to Jones Bridge Road - Widening	Roadway	North Subregion	Fulton	\$ 21,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 21,000,000
TIA-FN-003	SR 120 (Old Milton Parkway) from SR 400 to Kimball Bridge Road - Widening	Roadway	North Subregion	Fulton	\$ 37,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 37,000,000
TIA-FN-005	SR 120 (Old Milton Parkway) at SR 400 and Morris Road - Interchange/Intersection Improvements	Roadway	North Subregion	Fulton	\$ 1,900,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,900,000
TIA-FN-007	Rucker Road from Hardscrabble Road to Willis Road - Operational Improvements	Roadway	North Subregion	Fulton	\$ 19,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 19,000,000
TIA-FN-013	Hammond Drive from SR 9 (Roswell Road) to SR 400 - Improvements	Roadway	North Subregion	Fulton	\$ 10,000,000	\$ -	\$ 23,500,000	\$ 33,500,000
TIA-FN-014	SR 400 from I-285 North to Spalding Drive - Collector Distributor Lanes	Roadway	North Subregion	Fulton	\$ 160,000,000	\$ 30,000,000	\$ -	\$ 190,000,000
TIA-FN-030	SR 140 (Arnold Mill Road) from Cherokee County Line to Rucker Road - Widening	Roadway	North Subregion	Fulton	\$ 46,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 46,000,000

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Project ID	Project Name	Project Type	Subregion	Jurisdiction	TIA Funds Committed	Federal Funds Committed	Local Funds Committed (see note 1)	Total Funding Commitment
TIA-FN-034	SR 400 at SR 140 (Holcomb Bridge Road) - Interchange Improvements	Roadway	North Subregion	Fulton	\$ 23,000,000	\$ 25,000,000	\$ -	\$ 48,000,000
TIA-FN-035	SR 9 (Atlanta Street) from Chattahoochee River to SR 120 (Marietta Highway) - Widening and Corridor Improvements	Roadway	North Subregion	Fulton	\$ 20,400,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,400,000
TIA-FN-036	SR 140 (Houze Road) from Rucker Road to Mansell Road - Operational Improvements	Roadway	North Subregion	Fulton	\$ 18,600,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 18,600,000
TIA-FN-043	SR 120 (Abbotts Bridge Road) from Parsons Road (east of SR 141) to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard - Widening	Roadway	North Subregion	Fulton	\$ 28,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 28,000,000
TIA-FS-003	Hutcheson Ferry Rd at Atlanta Newnan Road and Rico Road - Roundabout	Roadway	Southwest Subregion	Fulton	\$ 1,750,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,750,000
TIA-FS-004	SR 6 (Camp Creek Parkway) from I-85 South to Welcome All Road - Widening	Roadway	Southwest Subregion	Fulton	\$ 60,250,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 60,250,000
TIA-FS-008	I-85 South at SR 74 - Interchange Improvements	Roadway	Southwest Subregion	Fulton	\$ 11,250,000	\$ 11,250,000	\$ -	\$ 22,500,000
TIA-FS-016	Butner Road at SR 6 (Camp Creek Parkway) Intersection Improvements and Butner Road over SR 6 (Camp Creek Parkway) Bridge Replacement	Roadway	Southwest Subregion	Fulton	\$ 3,500,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,500,000
TIA-FS-018	I-285 West at Cascade Road - Interchange Improvements	Roadway	I-285 Corridor	Fulton	\$ 11,800,000	\$ 11,800,000	\$ -	\$ 23,600,000
TIA-FS-019	SR 70 (Fulton Industrial Blvd) from SR 6 (Camp Creek Parkway) to Frederick Drive - Intersection Improvements at Multiple Locations	Roadway	West Subregion	Fulton	\$ 7,500,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,500,000
TIA-FS-026	SR 92 (Campbellton Fairburn Road) at South Fulton Parkway and Hall Road - Intersection Improvements	Roadway	Southwest Subregion	Fulton	\$ 16,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 16,000,000
TIA-GW-003	US 23 (Buford Highway) from George Pierce Park to McGinnis Ferry Road - Corridor Improvements	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 5,500,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,500,000
TIA-GW-004	US 23 (Buford Highway) from Old Peachtree Road to Sugarloaf Parkway - Widening and Corridor Improvements	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 14,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 14,000,000
TIA-GW-006	US 23 (Buford Highway) from Sawnee Avenue to SR 347 in Hall County - Widening	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 8,000,000	\$ 20,000,000	\$ -	\$ 28,000,000
TIA-GW-009	Dacula Road at CSX Rail Line North of US 29 - Bridge Upgrade	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 10,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000,000
TIA-GW-011	Five Forks Trickum Road from Killian Hill Road to Oak Road - Widening	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 10,400,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,400,000

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TIA-GW-018	Hillcrest Road / Satellite Boulevard Connector - New Alignment and Overpass at I-85 North	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 19,900,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 19,900,000
TIA-GW-025	I-85 North at SR 324 (Gravel Springs Road) - New Interchange	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 33,300,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 33,300,000
TIA-GW-030	US 29 (Lawrenceville Hwy) from Hood Road to Hillcrest Road - Multiuse Trail and Pedestrian Improvements	Bike/Ped	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 1,850,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,850,000
TIA-GW-031	I-85 North Transit Corridor (all phases)	Transit	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 95,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 95,000,000
TIA-GW-042	Pleasant Hill Road from Howell Ferry Road to Chattahoochee River - Widening (Includes Bridge)	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 11,600,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 11,600,000
TIA-GW-048	SR 20 (Nelson Brogdon Boulevard / Cumming Highway) from Peachtree Industrial Boulevard to Chattahoochee River - Widening	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 8,000,000	\$ 32,000,000	\$ -	\$ 40,000,000
TIA-GW-049	SR 20 (Buford Drive) from I-985 to US 23 (Buford Highway) - Widening	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 4,100,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,100,000
TIA-GW-052	SR 120 (Duluth Highway) from Langley Drive to SR 317 (Lawrenceville Suwanee Road) - Widening	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 38,400,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 38,400,000
TIA-GW-056	SR 141 (Peachtree Parkway) from Peachtree Industrial Boulevard to Chattahoochee River - Widening	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 46,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 46,000,000
TIA-GW-057	SR 316 at Harbins Road - Grade Separation	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 23,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 23,000,000
TIA-GW-058	SR 316 at Hi Hope Road / Cedars Road - Grade Separation	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 61,900,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 61,900,000
TIA-GW-059	SR 316 at US 29 - Grade Separation	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 51,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 51,000,000
TIA-GW-060	Sugarloaf Parkway Phase 2 Extension from SR 316 to SR 20 (Buford Drive) - New Alignment	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 296,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 296,000,000
TIA-GW-067	US 78 (Main Street) at SR 124 (Scenic Hwy) - Intersection Improvements	Roadway	East Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 9,550,000	\$ 9,550,000	\$ -	\$ 19,100,000
TIA-GW-069	Walther Boulevard North/South Connection - New Alignment and Overpass at SR 316	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 10,600,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,600,000
TIA-GW-070	West Liddell Road / Club Drive Connector - New Alignment and Overpass at I-85 North	Roadway	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 39,300,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 39,300,000
TIA-GW-073	Gwinnett County Bus Services	Transit	Northeast Subregion	Gwinnett	\$ 40,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 40,000,000

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TIA-HE-001	US 23 / SR 42 from SR 138 to SR 155 - Widening	Roadway	Southeast Subregion	Henry	\$ 44,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 44,000,000
TIA-HE-003	SR 155 (North McDonough Road) from Bill Gardner Parkway to Racetrack Road - Widening (Phase 1)	Roadway	Southeast Subregion	Henry	\$ 48,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 48,000,000
TIA-HE-005	Bill Gardner Parkway from SR 155 (North McDonough Road) to I-75 South - Widening	Roadway	Southeast Subregion	Henry	\$ 27,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 27,000,000
TIA-HE-008	SR 20/81 (Hampton Street / Keys Ferry Road) from Jonesboro Road at Norfolk Southern Railroad to Lemon Street - Extension and Upgrade of One-Way Pair through McDonough	Roadway	Southeast Subregion	Henry	\$ 11,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 11,000,000
TIA-HE-011	Western Parallel Connector from Hudson Bridge Road to SR 920 (Jonesboro Road) - New Alignment	Roadway	Southeast Subregion	Henry	\$ 17,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 17,000,000
TIA-HE-015	I-75 South at Bill Gardner Parkway - Interchange Improvements	Roadway	Southeast Subregion	Henry	\$ 9,500,000	\$ 9,500,000	\$ -	\$ 19,000,000
TIA-HE-016	SR 81 (Keys Road) from Lemon Street to Bethany Road - Widening	Roadway	Southeast Subregion	Henry	\$ 27,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 27,000,000
TIA-M-001	MARTA Train Control Systems Upgrade	Transit	Regional	Regional	\$ 4,440,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,440,000
TIA-M-002	MARTA Elevator and Escalator Rehabilitation Program	Transit	Regional	Regional	\$ 97,600,000	\$ -	\$ 21,100,000	\$ 118,700,000
TIA-M-003	MARTA Unified Transit Communication Infrastructure	Transit	Regional	Regional	\$ 27,200,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 27,200,000
TIA-M-004	MARTA Passenger Information System, Audio Visual Information System and Wayfinding	Transit	Regional	Regional	\$ 30,500,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30,500,000
TIA-M-005	MARTA Tunnel and Platform Lighting Upgrade	Transit	Regional	Regional	\$ 28,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 28,000,000
TIA-M-006	MARTA Tunnel Ventilation Rehabilitation	Transit	Regional	Regional	\$ 700,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 700,000
TIA-M-007	MARTA Electrical Power Rehabilitation	Transit	Regional	Regional	\$ 248,800,000	\$ 60,000,000	\$ 45,600,000	\$ 354,400,000
TIA-M-008	MARTA Track Rehabilitation	Transit	Regional	Regional	\$ 5,600,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,600,000
TIA-M-009	MARTA Aerial Structure Rehabilitation	Transit	Regional	Regional	\$ 90,000,000	\$ -	\$ 2,700,000	\$ 92,700,000
TIA-M-014	MARTA Airport Station Improvements	Transit	Regional	Regional	\$ 7,160,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,160,000
TIA-M-023	I-20 East Transit Corridor Investments	Transit	East Subregion	DeKalb	\$ 225,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 225,000,000
TIA-M-028	Clifton Corridor Transit - Lindbergh Center to Emory University / Centers for Disease Control	Transit	Central Subregion	DeKalb/Atlanta	\$ 700,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 700,000,000
TIA-RO-001	Sigman Road from Lester Road to Dogwood Connector - Widening and Corridor Improvements	Roadway	East Subregion	Rockdale	\$ 30,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30,000,000
TIA-RO-003	Commerce Crossing from Old Salem Road to Old Covington Highway - New Alignment and Overpass at I-20 East	Roadway	East Subregion	Rockdale	\$ 25,900,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25,900,000

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TIA-RO-008	Flat Shoals Road from SR 162 (Salem Road) to Old Salem Road - Widening	Roadway	East Subregion	Rockdale	\$ 11,400,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 11,400,000

Total Funding Commitments

\$ 6,140,172,377	\$ 846,880,000	\$ 112,900,000
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Total Value of Projects to be Delivered

\$ 7,099,952,377

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